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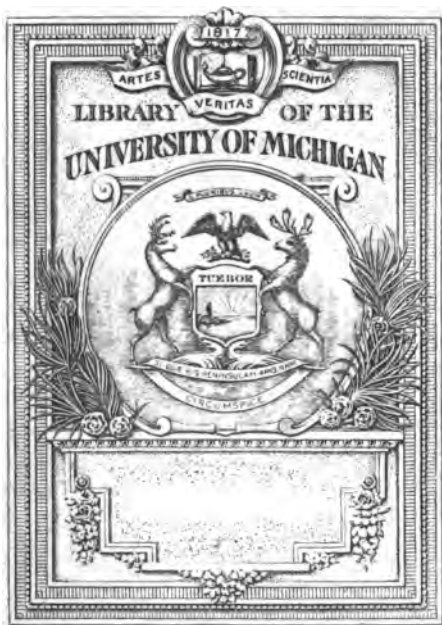
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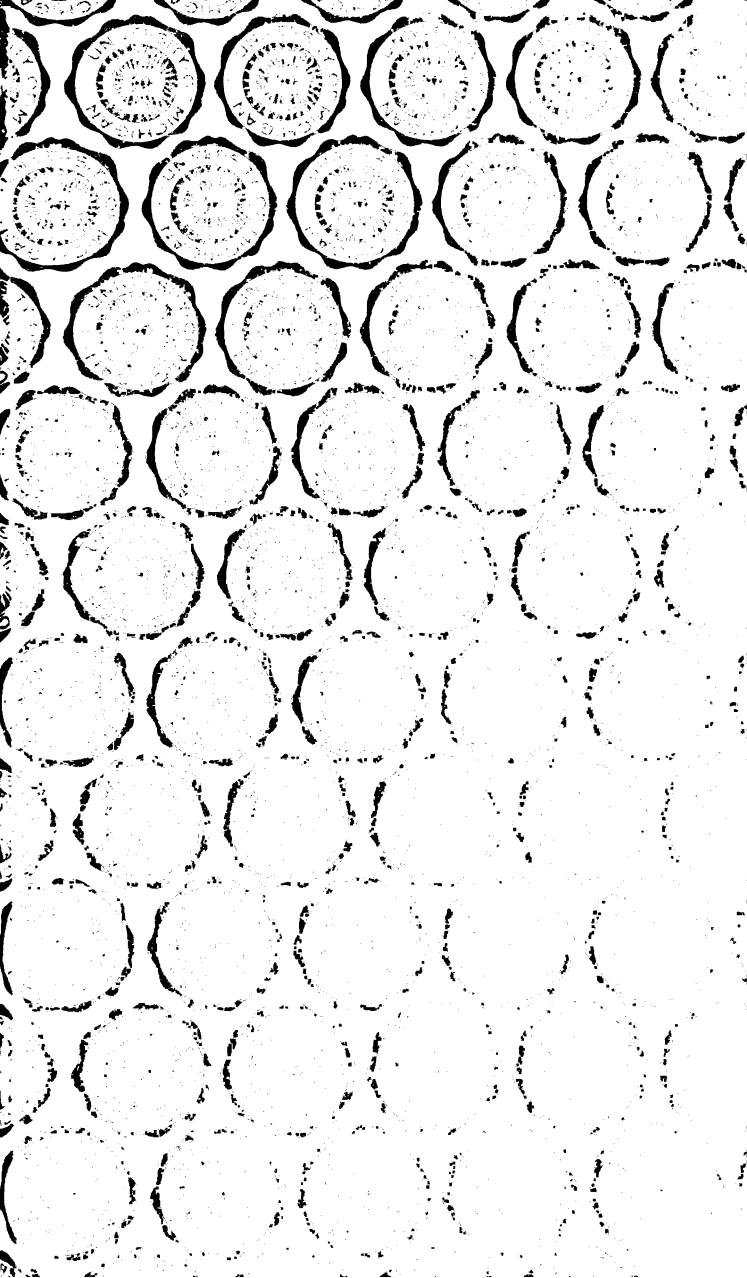
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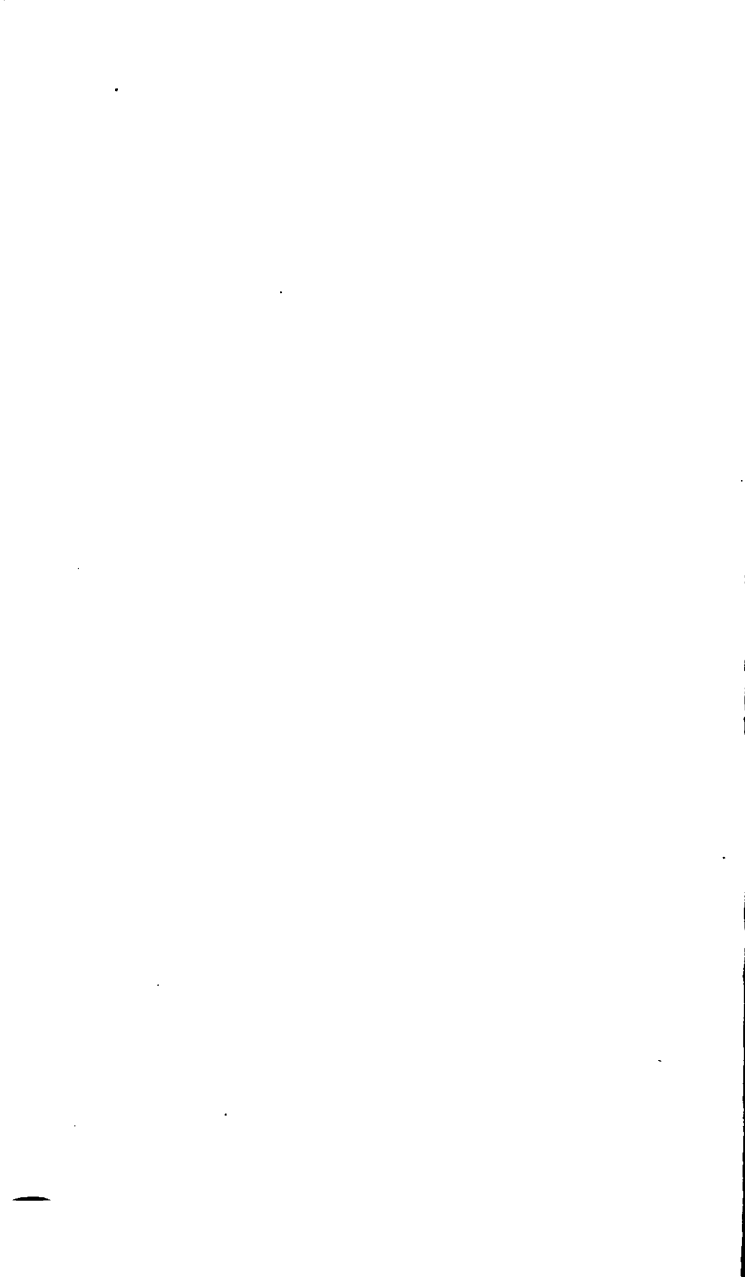






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THE STYRIAN LAKE,

AND

122652

OTHER POEMS.

BY THE REV.

FREDERICK WILLIAM FABER, M.A.

FELLOW OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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LONDON :
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TO THE
AUTHOR OF THE CHRISTIAN YEAR,
THIS VOLUME
IS WITH HIS KIND PERMISSION
RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
WITH THE HOPE
THAT AGE MAY BRING TO KINDRED ASPIRATIONS
A POETIC UTTERANCE
UNWORLDLY AS HIS OWN.

AMBLESIDE,
THE FEAST OF ST. SIMON AND ST. JUDE,
MDCCCXLII.

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Prelude to the Styrian Lake.

"A SINGLE DAY! A single nook of earth!
O how the heart doth magnify all things
Embraced within her soft and shadowy rings!
What a huge niche to shrine a single mirth,
A joy obscure as is the Styrian lake,
Vague as the odorous breath of pinewood brake!"—
Priest of a sylvan chapel, I would call
The world-worn pilgrim hither to take breath,
Joining in this my weekday ritual,
Of nature mixed and our most holy Faith.
If it be worth no more, at least it gives
Sweet proof how full the green earth is of glee:
My days are all like this; so let it be
A sample of the life a poet lives.

J. W. J.

THE ANNUNCIATION
OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

11

I.

The Styrian Lake.

I.

THE PLACE.

WHERE the Styrian mountains rise
Close to Mariazell, lies
Buried in a pinewood brake
A most beautiful green lake.
Lizard's back is not so green
As its soft and tremulous sheen ;
Hermits' home on Athos' hill
Cannot be a place more still.
Blissful Covert ! there is not
Like that Styrian lake a spot
That I know by land or sea,
Whose unsleeping memory
Works so potently in me.

'Tis good to have a nook of earth
To be with us in our mirth,
And to set a haunt apart
To be household in the heart,
A local shrine, whence gentle sorrow
Hope and soothing thought may borrow ;
And which may be every hour
In the light or shade or shower,
Or the stillness or the wind,
Or the sunset, as the mind
Would the light within should vary,—
A true mental sanctuary.
What may hallow grief, but thought
And soft feeling closely wrought ?
And the heart which in its pain
Can the outer world disdain,
And the kind earth which we tread,—
How shall it be comforted ?
And that pensive being, mirth,
If it be untied from earth,
Is a wanton, dreamy thing,
Like a pine-tree's murmuring.

Styria is a wondrous land,
Special work of beauty's hand,
Where amidst the tranquil pines
Many a green lake meekly shines,
And upon its bosom glasses
All the slumberous dark masses
From the mighty firwoods thrown,
And white steep and sunny cone.
For the forest murmurings,
And for lawny openings
Where in shady belts of trees
Nestle the lone villages,
For sweet brooks and ruined halls
And romantic waterfalls,
And a coloring so bright
That the land is green by night,
And for echoes waking round
When the convent bells do sound,
For unwonted woodland grace
Styria is a wondrous place :
And it is the nook of earth
That is with me in my mirth,

A real Eden, whence I borrow
Food for song and calm for sorrow.

Most I love that placid lake,
Buried in the pinewood brake.
There the little pool is laid
Quiet in the lispings shade,
Mountain water in a cup
To the blue skies looking up,
With the bubbles brightly beading
All the gleamy surface, feeding
Like the silver fish where'er
Earthy springs mount to the air.

There the little pool was laid
Quiet in the pinewood shade,
When the Roman hosts were come
To these woods of Noricum.
Emperors rose and tribunes fell,
Earth was governed ill or well;
There was famine, there was war,
And sedition's dreadful jar,
And man's lot became so dreary
That the earth grew old and weary.

Were it not for her free mirth
Men would make a slave of earth.
But this way there came no breath
Of calamity or death.
They pierced not through the pinewood
 brake
To the little Styrian lake.
All the changes which it saw
Were by the harmonious law
And the sweetly pleading reasons
Of the four and fair-tongued seasons.
Pearly dawn and hazy noon,
And the yellow-orbèd moon,
And the purple midnight, came
Through those very years the same.
The lake had its own free will,
So it was translucent still ;
For the summer day was fair,
When the white-banked clouds were there,
And the bright moths in the air,
And the thunder cleared away
For the evening's slanting ray,

And the thrushes in the rain
Sang with all their might and main
To the young ones in their home :
What recked they of mighty Rome
Not a moth or bird did shine
Brighter there for Constantine.
Blessed earth ! O blessed lake !
Shut within thy pinewood brake,
Angels saw thee in thy glee,
Of the Roman Empire free !

The romantic days came on :
Nature still as calmly shone
On the fragrant pinewood shade
Where the Styrian lake was laid.
Earl with belt and knight with spur—
These made no unwonted stir
In the green and glossy deep,
Nor woke echoes from the steep.
And if ever highborn maid
To the river did unlade
Her sad heart of freight of love—
When could songs hard fathers move ?—

Yet the stream forgot the wail
Ere it passed the sunken vale,
Where the little tremulous lake
Sparkles in the hollow brake.
And the merry hunting-horn,
Speaking in the cold white morn,
Bore not on its ringing breath
Tidings of the newborn Faith.
Yet methinks 'twere not unmeet
To believe a trouble sweet,
Like a new soul, found its road
Into that retired abode,
Somewhat of a murmuring
Through the pine-boughs vibrating,
When they caught the harmless swell
Of the earliest convent bell.
If sound have one human birth
Blending wholly with the earth,
Rising, growing, near or far,
With no other sound at war,
Which can sorrow or rejoice
Like a natural earthborn voice,

Natural as the breezes blowing,
Pastoral as the oxen lowing,—
'Tis the undulating swell
Of the woodland abbey bell.

2.

THE LEGEND.

So eleven ages fled
Since the Lord rose from the dead,
Maker of this little lake,
Moth and bird and pinewood brake,
To redeem the sons of earth
And give them a better birth,
Not without the element
From the earth's own bosom sent,
Thus to heighten and to bless
Our old mother's loveliness,
From her surface to unweave
All the ravelled web which Eve—
Name her with a tender thought!—
Hath o'er field and forest wrought,

To enrich her with a dower
Of true sacramental power.
Not without her blameless gifts
Jesus her lost children lifts
To a nature all divine,
Better, dearest earth ! than thine.
So eleven ages passed,
While the pines their shadow cast,
Making summer noonday cool
By the green sequestered pool.

Hither for the love of Mary
Came a gentle Missionary,
With an Image of black wood
From an ancient limetree hewed,
Shaped for her, the Mother mild,
Blessed Mary with her Child.
With the Image to the dell
Came the gift of miracle,
Shrined within a sylvan Cell.

Far away mid cultured bowers
Rose St. Lambert's convent towers,
The Cistercian Saint, who stood
'Gainst King Pepin, and his blood,

By the lewd Alpais slain,
Ran in Liege street like rain.
Out from yon Cistercian home
This kind-mannered Monk hath come
With St. Mary and her Child
So to hallow the green wild.
Not the moon when she o'ertops
Lofty Seeberg's ragged copse,
Clearing all the dusky pine,
In the starry sky to shine,
Hunting with her arrowy beam
Open spots in Salza's stream,
Where at times it may emerge
Scarce beyond the forest's verge,—
Not the stealthy breath of spring
Up the woodlands murmuring,
Drawing after it a veil
Of thin green across the dale,
Like an Angel's robe behind,
Still, or stirred by odorous wind :
Not so welcome, moon or spring,
For the quiet gifts they bring ;

Advents though they be of bliss,
They bear not a boon like this,—
Blessed Mary and her Son
Deep into the woodlands gone,
One poor monk, a beadsman lowly,
With gilt vessels rude but holy,
And a power of miracle
Shed into the whispering dell,
Lodged within and screened apart
In the forest's dusky heart,

Now amid the woodmen nigh
Marriage is a blissful tie,
And around the infant's birth
Is a light of Christian mirth,
And the monk can breathe a breath
On the anxious face of death.
Life is drawn within a ring
Of most peaceful hallowing.
To the Mother and the Maid
The rude men their breasts unlade,
Seeking to her Son for aid.
Like the valley's evening mist
By the pensive sunset kissed,

Charities and virtues rise
With all household sanctities,
While meek hymns and praises flow
From the hermitage below ;
And the little bell is rung
When the blessed Mass is sung,—
All, a blameless incense, given
From the pinewoods into Heaven,
From the shaggy Styrian dell
Of St. Mary of the Cell.

Thou wert not unstirred, dear lake !
Though perchance thou didst not wake
From the sleep wherein the wind
Doth thy green depths seem to bind,
Sighing sweetly, softly, sadly,
Sighing sometimes almost gladly,
As the pinetree only sighs,
Maker of earth's elegies :—
Thou wert not unstirred that day,
When upon thy marge at play
First a Christian child was seen,
White as snowwreath on a green,

Pure as nature's self, and bright
With a more abounding light.

Let the gentle memory
Of the plain monk honored be,—
He who for the love of Mary
Hither came a missionary,
A devout and nameless being
To the Styrian forests fleeing,
To baptize the woodmen rude
In this shady solitude,
And to add a better mirth
To the glory of the earth.
Holy monk ! thy good deeds shine
Above peer or palatine,
Gleaming through the crowded past
With a radiance calm and chaste,
Like a steady, pensive star,
By itself, and brighter far
Than the sparkling ruddy ring
Round the name of some old king.
Yet *thy* quiet name is gone
In the shadow of some throne,

Lost amid the jewelled throng,
All embalmed in unwise song.
Let the pageant pass away ;—
There is thy domestic ray !
There art thou—a lily-flower
In a most unthought-of bower,
Or a very fragrant tree,
Which we smell but cannot see,
Buried in the tangled wood,
Scenting all the neighborhood.
Thou, a man of simple ways,
Never could'st have joyless days ;
Thou, a man of simple wants,
Must have loved the sylvan haunts,
Ever to thy spirit stealing
With a touch of heavenly feeling.
Oft I doubt not by this lake,
Forcing through the pinewood brake,
Thou didst spend the twilight dim,
Chanting some rough latin hymn,
Hallowing the evening air
With devout half-spoken prayer.

Mists upon the mighty hills
And the alder-belted rills,
Chirping bird and lowly flower,
And the rainbow in the shower,
And the air when it receives
Incense from the withered leaves,
And the pinetrees in the sun,
And the green lake at the noon
Imaging the empty moon,
Whose unfreighted orb is white
For the lack of yellow light ;—
Like the Church whose Lord must go
Ere she can reflect the glow
Of His glory, deep and vast,
In her bridal bosom cast,
So the moon all day must bide
For an evening Whitsuntide :—
All this common tranquil round,
This sweet ring of sight and sound,
Did of old belong to thee,
And to-day belongs to me ;

And it soothed thy wrinkled brow
And thy heart thou knew'st not how.
Ah kind-mannered monk ! I seem,
As in some strong-featured dream,
To come nigh and spend an hour
With thee in this Styrian bower ;
So much hath the blissful thought
Of thy doings in me wrought.
Centuries are yielding things :
Unity of spirit brings
Land to land, and year to year,
And old generations near.
Thus I walk o'er this green land
Through the forests hand in hand
With the simple Missionary,
Who for love of Mother Mary
Was content apart to dwell
With her Image in his cell.

And thus for a hundred years
Simple joys and simple fears
Compassed some Cistercian brother,
Beadsman to the blessed Mother ;

Till it chanced that far away
In the drear Moravia,
Margrave Henry dreamed a dream,
Where the Mother-Maid did seem
To heal him of his disease
In a cell amid green trees,
And the visionary lines,
Pictured Styria's rocks and pines,
And the Margrave saw the lake,
And the matted pinewood brake.
So he came with trusting soul,
And St. Mary made him whole.
Costly Church with tower and bell
Rises in the sylvan dell,
Arching o'er the antique cell.
Now in long and gorgeous line
Emperors crowd unto the shrine,
Peers and ladies and proud kings
Kneel there with their offerings ;
Silken banners, bright and brave,
Through the dusky pinewoods wave,

And the peasants of far lands
Come with wild flowers in their hands,—
All come here to Mary's haunt
With a sorrow or a want.
Yet I ween the shaggy dell
Witnessed worthier miracle,
When the woodmen of the place
Were transformed by inward grace;
And from their wild manners grew
Flowers that feed on heavenly dew,
And soft thoughts and gentle ways
Could beguile their rugged days.
Love of Mary was to them
As the very outer hem
Of the Saviour's priestly vest,
Which they timorously pressed,
And whereby a simple soul
Might for faith's sake be made whole.

3.

CHURCH MATINS.

Oh how beautiful was dawn
On the Styrian mountain lawn,
When the lights and shadows lay
Where the night strove with the day !
From my window did I look
Upon Salza's glimmering brook,
And the valley dark and deep,
And the ponderous woods asleep ;
And I saw the little lake
Like a black spot in the brake.
And the silver crescent moon
Of the greenwood month of June,
Hanging o'er a mountain cone
As if she would settle down,
Seemed to look around in wonder
At the landscape brightening under.
In the sky there was a light
Which was not a birth of night,

A stealthy streak, and pearly pale,
Like a white transparent veil,
And there came a chilly breeze,
Like the freshness of the seas,
As though hills and woods on high
Now were breathing heavily ;
And among the woodlands wide
Here and there a wild bird cried.
Where the dewy alders grow
I could hear the oxen low ;
But the echo that did follow
Was a sound more dead and hollow
Than the leaping voice that fills
Daylight skies and daylight hills.
On the pastures was a light
Which was neither day nor night,
And the dusky frowning wood
Still in moonlight shadows stood.
But a mist o'er Salza's bed
Hovered like a gossamer thread ;
And I saw the glorious scene
Every moment grow more green,—

Day encroaching with sweet light
On the fairy-land of night.
I remember well that dawn
On the Styrian mountain lawn.

Blessed be the Lord Who made
Sun and moon, and light and shade,
And the heart to feel and love
All the joys that round us move !
Blessed be the Angels bright,
Ordering the pomp aright,
Ministrants of winds and showers,
Ruddy clouds and sunset hours,
With fair robe and busy wing
The mute figures marshalling,
Like a ceremonial thing !
Blessed be the Cross that draws
From the earth by dreadest laws
Sparkling streams that cleanse and shine,
Making little babes divine,
And the grape's red blood, and bread
On the Altar offered :

Symbols, more than symbols, urns
Where a Heavenly Presence burns,
Making earth to be all rife
With a supernatural life.

Sweet into the morning dim
Rose the happy pilgrim's hymn,
Catching from each distant height,
In the grey uncertain light,
The calm bliss of summer morning
Upon Mariazell dawning.
From the Salza's shady bed,
From the mountain's rocky head,
From the earthy path that shines
Down the steep and through the pines,
From the meadow-lands below
Like a very stream doth flow
The sweet song and plaintive greeting
Of the weary pilgrims meeting ;
" All hail in thy sylvan tent,
" Mary, fairest Ornament !"
Mother Mary ! 'tis a thing
Soothing as the breath of spring,

In the quiet time to hear
This wild region far and near
With the very accents swell
Of the blessed Gabriel.
'Tis a wonder and a grace
In this uncouth pinewood place,
Mid white rocks and gloomy trees
And old Noric fastnesses,
To look forth and calmly listen,
While above the pale stars glisten ;
And to hear the grateful song
Of the gentile pilgrim-throng,
The old angelic greeting, given
To the Virgin Queen of Heaven.
What are ages, what is time
To a ritual thus sublime ?
How shall distance or decay
Make or mar eternal day ?
For a heavenly word once spoken
Is an everlasting token,
Still by time or space unbroken ;

And through weary centuries,
Quivering on the very breeze,
Word divine and angel breath
Hover to the ear of faith,
Finding souls which they may win,
And meek hearts to enter in.
I see Mary rapture-bound,
And the lily-flowers around,
And the smooth and spotless bed,
And the Angel overhead,
And the open casement where
Blows the fresh and virgin air,
And Our Lady, mute and pale,
Listening to the strange "All Hail."
And I hear—years hinder not—
Angel accents on the spot;
Hark! the Styrian vale is ringing
With the gentile pilgrims singing.
 Breaking on the quiet dell
Slowly swings the heavy bell,
And the organ breathes a sound
Into all the pinewoods round.

What a trouble of delight
There hath been the livelong night !
Mariazell ! thou hast seen
Sleepers few this night, I ween.
One by one, the pilgrims throng,
Coming in with plaintive song ;
And in many a gaudy shed
Beads and Crosses are outspread.
Like the stars that one by one
Come to shine when day is done,
Still they flock with merry din,
From the valley of the Inn,
From the Ennsland green and deep,
And the rough Carinthian steep,
From the two lakes of the Save,
And the blythe rich banks of Drave,
And the Mur's rock-shadowed floods,
That shy haunter of the woods,
From the low Dalmatian sea,
And the sea-like Hungary,
And where Danube's waters pass
By Belgrade through the morass,

From Bavaria's sandy dells
And the smooth Bohemian fells,
From Würzburg and from Ratisbon.
Linz and Passau they have gone ;
And St. John of Prague hath sent
Worshippers to Mary's tent,
Where she waits her serfs to bless
In the Styrian wilderness.
Still they pass unheeded by ;
From the village every eye
Goes with eager anxious look
Up the Salza's tumbling brook :
No white banners yet have showed
On the great Vienna road.
In the pauses of the ringing
They can hear no far-off singing,
And the signal hath not fired,
And the youthful groups are tired.
Yet 'twas whispered overnight
They'd leave Annaberg ere light.
Pomp of crowds and festal noise
Are not numbered in my joys ;

So I sought the little lake
And the lonely pinewood brake.
The sweet day was clouded over,
And the thunder seemed to hover
O'er the dark, unruffled flood,
And the silent neighborhood.
Scarce a creature seemed to stir
In that wilderness of fir.
Not a note of singing bird
In the tangled dell was heard :
And the forest lands did wear
A dark robe of lurid air.
On the mountains there did press
A dullhearted silentness.
Peace was round me, and a calm,
Yet without the soothing balm
Shed on us by earth and sea
In their true tranquillity.
Swarms of moths from out the brake
Fluttered all across the lake,
And the leaping fishes made
Dreary splashes in the shade,

Where an ancient pinetree throws
O'er the pool its drooping boughs.
Where the marge was strewn all over
With a tapestry of clover,
The dull skies appeared to lower
On the mute and blameless flower ;
All the soft and pleasant brightness
Like a breath passed from its whiteness ;
As the soul of man whose beauty
Fades, when the meek sense of duty
Passes forth with hasty wing,
Like a wronged and banished thing.
From the ragged trees on high,
From the murky, swaying sky,
From the summit, white and tall,
With its black pine coronal,
A dark power of gloom did fall,
Weighing on the little lake,
Hushing all the pinewood brake,
Tarnishing each radiant sight,
Sheathing all the gay green light,

Deadening every summer sound,
To a drowsy tingling bound.
Beauty strove, and strove again,
And the summer strove in vain.
Over lake and pines and all
Was a very funeral pall.
Can it be a curse doth lurk
In the heart of earth at work ?
Yet in that translucent deep
Furtive beauty seems to creep,
Like a stealthy sunbeam winding
Through the ocean-depths, and finding
Creatures in them, meek and bright,
Whom to gladden with its light.

Thus doth earth for ever bless
True hearts with her loveliness,
Stealing to them in the storm
With some fair and happy form,
Uttering some joyous sound
In a bleak and joyless ground,
Planting moss and brilliant grass
In the heart of the morass.

Light within the lake doth move
When there is no light above,
And the sunshine, which should glow
In the blue skies, works below,
As far down as eye can follow
In the green, transparent hollow,
Streaking it with silvery shoot,
As though sunbeams could take root
In the lake with lawless mirth,
And shine upwards to the earth.
Thou alone, dear earth ! of all
Art a blameless prodigal !
When the heaven above is dull,
And thy yearning heart is full
Of a wish to solace one
Who into thy fields hath gone
To take comfort from thy gladness
Or hope from thy patient sadness,—
When the cheerless heaven above
Will not aid thee in thy love,
Thou some inner light canst win
As though from a heaven within.

Could I think that still at work
The old curse in thee did lurk ?
Shall a thought of curse come nigh,
When I hear that Christian cry ?
Hark ! at last the joyous song
Of Vienna's pilgrim-throng :
" All hail in thy sylvan tent,
Mary, fairest Ornament ! "

Tarries the procession still ?
See ! it winds along the hill,
Like a snake of green and gold
In the sunshine all unrolled, ·
Or coiling round a mossy tree,
Fearful and yet fair to see.
Thus the bright and bending throng
Slowly draws itself along,
Swayed by modulating song.
Mitred prelates at its head
Upon flowers and sweet flags tread.
Gifts from kings of foreign lands,
Banners worked by royal hands,

And a hundred shining things,
Peer's or peasant's offerings,
Move along the uneven ground,
While the distant thunders sound.
'Ere I reached them I could hear,
Filling all the forests near,
"Mariazell! schönste Zier!"—
Plaintive burden, that will quiver
In my spell-bound ear for ever.

My dear land! I thought of thee;
And I thought how scantily,
In what thrifty rivulets,
Faith's weak tide among us sets.
And I looked with tearful eyes,
With an envious surprise,
Upon that huge wave that passed,
On the Styrian highlands cast
With a mighty, sea-like fall
From the Austrian capital.
Though to thine austerer view
Something faulty and untrue

With their ritual doth breathe,
Love, oh ! love them for their faith.

O'er twelve hundred kneelers there
Hangs a veil of odorous air,
Rising up in thin blue spires
From the swinging censer-fires.
And through all the gloomy pile,
Like a river down each aisle,
With a strong and heavy flowing
Are the pealing organs blowing ;
And the banners rich and brave
On the current lightly wave,
Like the willow-bough that quivers
On the bosom of the rivers.

Who could gaze while others kneel ?
Who could tarry still to feel
That he was an exile there,
Cast upon a sea of prayer,
Like a dull and heartless wreck,
Floating, an unsightly speck,
On the level of the ocean
With an uncouth, errant motion,

Symbol on a sunny day

Of a tempest far away ?

While the mighty hymns were swelling
I rushed from out the sacred dwelling,
With full heart and burning thought ;
So much had the ritual wrought,
That I scarcely could control
The strong impulse of my soul
To fall down and weep outright
At the great and solemn sight.
When from that full house of prayer
I passed into the open air,
Ah ! did ever sweet surprise
From old objects so arise
With a strange, bewildering power,
As in that most thrilling hour ?

In the western porch I stood
Amid mountain wastes and wood,
And the hollow tolling thunder,
And the misty valleys under,
Cloud-strewn forests with stray gleams,
And the alder-belted streams,

In the rain the pinewoods singing,
With a rustling whisper ringing,—
Nature filling all the senses
With her blameless influences ;
For the rocky foaming floods
And the wet and dripping woods
Fresher and more fragrant are
Than the incense-loaded air.
Mid this glory I am free,
Mother-Maid ! to think of thee
With a love as deep as theirs
Who are seeking thee in prayers ;
Neither am I left alone
Mid the Styrian pinewoods thrown,
The only one who cannot trace
In this dusky sylvan place
Footprints of true miracle
Wrought within the savage dell,
In the beauty of these forms
Which are mingling with the storms,
And the work, blessed Mother Mary !
Of thine ancient missionary.

4.

MARGARET'S PILGRIMAGE.

Now why weep ye by the shrine,
Ye two maidens? Wherefore twine
Roses red and sprigs of pine,
With a busy absent air,
Round the pilgrim-staffs ye bear?
From Vienna with high heart
Ye set forward to take part
In the pilgrimage of grace
To St. Mary's sylvan place,—
Three fair sisters, loveliest three
In the pilgrim-company.
See! encased in many a gem
Mary with her diadem,
And, sweet thought! the Mother mild
Lifts on high her holy Child:
As the pensive artist thought
So hath he the limewood wrought.

Why stand ye thus sorrow-bound,
While the train is kneeling round?
And the little Margaret too,
With her eyes of merry blue,
Wherefore is she not with you?
And the staff she was so long
In selecting from a throng
In the Graben, weeks ago
'Ere the flowers began to blow,
And then took it to be blessed
At St. Stephen's by the priest,—
Hath it failed her, faint and weary,
In some Styrian pinewood dreary?
Ah! she felt the dogstar rage,
And she fain her thirst would swage—
It was her first pilgrimage—
At a cold and brilliant spring
By the wayside murmuring.
Ah sweet child! bright, happy flower!
She was broken from that hour.
They have left her on the steep
Of green Annaberg asleep.

| With crossed hands upon her breast
| Her choice staff is lightly pressed.
Margaret will awake no more,
Save upon a calmer shore.

Oh what can the sisters say
To the couple far away ?
What will the old burgher do,
Since those eyes of merry blue,
The true sunlight of his home,
Never, never more can come ?
See ! they sing not, but they gaze
Deep into the jewelled blaze,
And the thought within them swells,—
Mary hath worked miracles !
And they weep, and gaze away,
As though they would almost say,
“ Mother Mary ! couldst thou make
Margaret from her sleep awake ? ”

Thus oft fares it upon earth
With a long-expected mirth :
And when hope is strained too much,
Lo ! it shivers at the touch.

Even from a holy rite
There may fade the cheering light,
When for long its single thought
Deep within the heart hath wrought.
This will sometimes quell the ray
Even of an Easter Day.

Deem not thou no grace is there,
Though the rite seem cold and bare,
Though it be a weary thing,
A dull, formal offering.
It may lodge a light within,
Wrestling with the shades of sin,
And like frankincense may be
To think of in memory.

When the gay procession passed
I knew not what cloud was cast
On these sisters, sorrow-laden,
By the death of that fair maiden.
When it drew itself along,
As one creature, bright and strong,
All instinct with life and song,

Like a child I did not think
That each bending joint and link
Of the sinuous pageant could
Be true hearts of flesh and blood,
Fountains of true hopes and fears,
With ebb and flow of smiles and tears,
Each a separate orb that moves
In a sphere of pains and loves.
To mine eye it did but seem
As a very fluent dream,
And it filled me with a sense
Of joy, and not of reverence.

Ah! to many this great world
Is a pageant, thus unfurled,
Banners waving in the air,
Catching sunlight here and there,
O'er uneven places swaying
Or in quiet woods delaying,
Everywhere fresh shapes displaying,
As the clouds their forms unbind
To new figures in the wind;

And man's voiceful destinies,
Like the surge of meeting seas,
Are to them but a wild song
Breathing from the gilded throng.
Thus do idle poets stand
Lonely on the tide-ribbed sand,
Watching the bright waters roll
As a beauty without soul,
Knowing nothing of the worth
Of a human woe or mirth,
Or of that true dignity
Which in love and sorrow lie.
And the books they write are all
But a mute processional,
Lifeless rubrics, canons dull
Of the bright and beautiful,
Formal wisdom, without stir,
Passion-tempered character,
Or imperial instincts meeting,
Or a hot heart in it beating.
But the masters of true song,
Who would sway the various throng,

Must in the procession walk,
To their fellow-pilgrims talk,
Weep or smile on every thing
With a kindly murmuring,
And that murmur so shall be
An immortal melody.

Sisters twain ! though now ye sorrow,
Ye shall have a calmer morrow ;
Mariazell shall become
In long years a placid home
For remembrances, and tears
Which spring not from pains or fears ;
And this pilgrimage that seems
Broken up, like baffled dreams,
Then shall be a very haunt
For your spirits when they want
Of soft feeling deep to drink :
It shall be a joy to think
How the merry Margaret sleeps
Mid the Styrian pinewood steeps.

5.

EARTH'S VESPER.

Once more went I to the lake,
Buried in the pinewood brake.
Through the parting clouds the light
Of the afternoon was bright.
Beautiful and gay and green
On my pathway was the scene,—
Gorges full of writhing mist
By the amorous sunbeams kissed,
And the mountains all displayed
In a marvellous light and shade.
Close before us there was one,
Clear and tranquil in the sun,
And another on whose breast
Clambering mist-wreaths paused to rest,
And a third along whose side
Snowy cloudbanks seemed to ride,
And did like a girdle shine
In a long and level line :

And one there was, veiled all over
With a thin mist which did hover
On the mountain-top to throw
Silky threads from bough to bough ;
'Twas lighted up and very fair,
And transparent as the air,
And within it rose the hill
Clothed with sunlight, green and still.
And the booming of the bells
And the hymn that came in swells
Mingled kindly with the mirth
Of the jubilant old earth.
In the lake and in the heaven
Gloom and beauty now had striven ;
Changed were all things on the shore,
For the strife at length was o'er.
Mists in serpentine array
Coiled upon the treetops lay ;
Truthful symbols did they seem
Of darkness giving way to gleam,
Drawing off in that sweet hour
The outskirts of his vanquished power.

Beauty on the hills was standing,
In the very lake expanding
With a pure and sparkling green,
And the savage pinewood scene
Did the afternoon embrace
With a calm and softening grace.
Stillness was in all her veins,
Earth's thanksgiving after rains,
Tuneful as the stormy praise
Of wild woods on windy days,
Or the benedicite
Of the angry purple sea.
Not a single sound was heard,
Save the voice of one shy bird,
And the woodman's axe on high,
And the drowsy sheepbell nigh.
There was not a fall of wind
From the clover to unbind
Odors that lay fettered there,
And to shed them on the air.
Ruddy-armored perch did press
To the margin motionless.

And the summer afternoon,
Holding court that day of June,
Throned herself with lustre mild
On the blissful Styrian wild.

O how often have I known
Quiet thought herself enthrone,
After tempests, on my mind
Without any breathing wind
Of sweet language which could bind
In the bonds and links of song
All the glorious regal throng,
Kindled fancy's courtier crowd,
Which came o'er me like a cloud :
Times of quiet thought they are,
Like this very bright mute air,
Filling as a soul the lake
And the odorous pinewood brake,
With the calm and speechless scene
Passive in the sunny green.
They are fancy's afternoons,
Shadows of her leafy Junes,

Shedding, where the heart is calm,
New power in the quiet balm.
Though he fret at fruitless hours
Spent in rapture's voiceless bowers,
Yet the poet oft must bless
His deep spirit's silentness,
As the future salient spring
Of true minstrel murmuring.

Song's an exile from above,
Like a wanderer in love,
Falling both by land and sea
Into strangest company,
Ruling, wheresoever thrown,
With a sweet will of its own.
Fancy, like the earth, hath dew,
Keeping green the spirit's hue,
Falls of moisture which renew
Hearts that falter and grow weary
From the sense that life is dreary,—
With such freshness that the glory
Of our thoughts is never hoary.

There are sabbaths in the mind,
Which in deepest quiet bind
Love and passion and the world
With its glowing landscapes furled :
When the song of vernal bird
Like a common sound is heard,
When the sun and wind and shower
And the rainbows have no power,
And the forest and the lake
Can no inward echo wake.
Memories of smiles and tears
Treasured up in other years,
Sorrow suffered, actions done,
Self-restraints by patience won,
Rights of grief and rights of love,
Things which once the soul could move
With a deeper ebb and flow
Than the freeborn oceans know,
Now are dull and nerveless things,
Like a forest's murmurings
Falling on the unpleased ear
Of a listless traveller.

And from all things there hath passed
Powers they once might have to cast
Shadows, from whose tender gloom
We might free, as from a womb,
Truths that shall outlive the tomb.

Yet shall true-born poet deem
Mental sabbaths but a dream,
Languor, and a falling back
Of the weary soul for lack
Of high hope and strength of wing
In such thin air hovering ?
Shall he call such quiet time
Faintings after moods sublime,
As though rapture's light could scathe
Spirits, like a fit of wrath ?
Mystery and loveliness
Gender no such wild excess ;
Mirth and beauty lay not waste
Flowery paths where they have passed.
In such times of inward sinking
Fancy may perchance be drinking

Waters in some holier spirit,
Out of earth, in Heaven, or near it.
True it is that a sweet spring
Cannot be a self-born thing ;
It must have a leafy place
Or a mountain's rocky face.
Its beginning and its going,
And the surety of its flowing
Not a single, rainy day,
Nor at seasons, but alway,—
These depend on other things,
The green covert whence it springs,
And the weeping clouds of heaven
Out of which the rain is given,
And the ponderous old hills,
The treasures of crystal rills.

So the spirit of sweet song
Not entirely doth belong
Unto him who hath been bidden
To let it flow through him unhidden,
And to keep its fountain hidden.

How should he know all the causes
Of its gushes and its pauses,
How it visits the well-head
Whence it is replenishèd,
What it hears, or what it sees,
How it hath its increases ?
Where and whenso'er it goes,
This one thing the poet knows,
That the spirit, wake or sleeping,
Is not now beneath his keeping.

For, if it do leave him not,
Whence are its fresh pulses got ?
After all this seeming dulness,
Whence the beam, the burst, the fulness,—
When the dark and bright of life,
Involutions of its strife,
And the duties complicate
Of this heavy mortal state,
And the gold and purple maze
Which the past is, to our gaze
Looking into other days,

And the passions which have rent
Worse than warring element,
Earth's fair surface where we dwell,—
All within the spirit swell,
And burst from us loud and strong,
Claiming utterance in song ?

Whence except from out of heaven
Are the moulds of greatness given,
And the beautiful creations,
And the song-like visitations
Of high thoughts, wherewith we borrow,
Grandeur out of love and sorrow,
When the weight of men's distresses
On our solemn spirit presses,
With a sound in its recesses,
When our fellow-mortals call,
And we own a kindred thrall
In responses musical,
When the mystery of things
From our tortured spirit wrings
Those loud wails of melody,
As from eagles in the sky ?

Whence the fragrant under-growth,
Which is springing nothing loth
All around us every hour
With fresh moss and modest flower,
In our fancy's stillest bower,
And those lowlier sweetnesses
Borne to us on every breeze ?

After dulness what a thing
Is our heart's awakening,
When a scattering of dew
Unawares makes all things new,
As a bunch of cold wet flowers
On our brow in feverish hours !
Like an unimprisoned boy,
Heaviness encounters joy
In the face of an old mountain,
In the splash of an old fountain,
In the sun and wind and rain,
Like things lost and found again ;
Till we own we never know
Common blooms that round us blow,

Common treasures strewn about us,
Close at hand, and scarce without us.—
Whence are all these wakenings given,
If it be not out of heaven ?
That the might in poet's breast
Wholly in himself doth rest,
Wholly from himself doth come,
As though he could be the home
Of the beautiful bright throng
He but weaveth into song—
Were a creed to disenchant
Music's best and holiest haunt,
And to leave on land or sea
Not a home for minstrelsy.

Beauty is a thing that grows,
Like love or grief ; and who knows
If in dulness and in calm
Fancy does not gather balm
In far fields that bud and swell
With spiritual asphodel ?
O how beautiful is quiet
After fancy hath run riot,

Waking love and waking mirth
Over all the sleepy earth !
O how beautiful to look
On kind eyes, as on a book,
Reading love that hath been beaming
All the while our hearts were teeming
With unearthly thoughts and visions,
Floating in with sweet collisions !
And how beautiful a thing
Is our dull life's welcoming,
When we learn, while we were ranging,
Household earth hath not been changing,
And that houses, trees, and faces
Are not wildly shifting places,
That there are domestic blisses,
Still kind words, and still kind kisses,
Still a common human heart,
Though we were awhile apart !
O there is a gracious fulness
In this very seeming dulness,
When the littleness of life
Is more welcome than its strife,

Or we in wise moods confess
That strife is but a littleness !
There is not a choicer bower
Than the spirit, in the hour
When peace cometh after power ;
And what hath the earth of beauty
Like the calms that follow duty ?

 This hath been a day of joy
Much too simple for alloy,
One pure day that well may shine,
Like stars amid the twilight pine.
Now behold ! the tranquil power
Of the summer-evening hour
Is enthroned upon the spot ;
And the pageant cometh not
With the gauzy purple veil
Of the English twilight pale,
But winds o'er the forest scene
With a light of faint blue green,
To a thousand pinetops yielding
Somewhat almost of a gilding.

There is meaning in the face
Of the lake and woodland place.
Something heavenly there must be
In such deep tranquillity.
With meet prayer and gratitude
I went from the solitude,
And to Mariazell wending,
Up the pine-clad steep ascending,
I beheld the dark clouds drooping,
Once more to the mountains stooping :
Yet along the ridges dim
Lay a luminous gold rim,
Such as makes me think the while
That beyond in brightest smile
Lies a very radiant shore
I have visited before,
In my boyhood, or in gleams
Shed on my far-travelled dreams.

The one woodless mountain too
Was of brilliant golden hue,
And its precipices hoary
Touched with sunset's mellow glory.

From a hollow white-mouthed cave
Rose a symbol, calm and grave,—
A broken rainbow—whose bright end
In the cavern did descend,
With mute stationary mirth,
Like a very growth of earth.
The dark clouds a moment hover—
They descend—the pomp is over !

For the day's exceeding beauty
Must be a return of duty,
And to Christ Who thus hath given
Sights and sounds in earth and heaven,
We must answer at the last
For the pageantry now past.
Hark ! how plaintively they sing ;—
Never was on holy thing
A more touching commentary
Than the pilgrim's Ave Mary !

II.

To the Memory of a Town-pent Man.

FAREWELL, kind Spirit ! Like a summer cloud
With no ungentle gloom hath death come down
All calmly on the sunshine of old age :
And now thou sleepest. From the far-off land
Of hills and rivers thou didst love in youth
Perchance upon thy dying ear there fell
Voices and mystic sounds with cadence strange,
That spoke in thrilling echoes of the time
Of youth's high breathings, manhood's energies.
Or thoughts, long since forgotten, then came in,
Came through the obscure posterns of the soul,
And thy strong frame was stirred ; and in thine
 eyes
There went and came a childlike simpleness ;
While ever and anon a heavenly light
(Such would I deem the birthplace of those looks

That pass upon the features of the sick)
Flashed forth in broken gleams, chasing away
The films of death : even like the voiceless breeze
That comes with evening shadows from the hills,
Dimpling the lucid breast of some deep lake.

Thy lot was hard, benevolent Old Man !
Most hard indeed ! Thou wouldst have pitched
thy tent,

(A simple tent as for an out-door man,
A man of the fresh air and merry skies)
Where some lone streamlet wells from out its urn
Of moss-clad rock, there gladly listening
The quiet music of the mountain winds ;
And tuning thy full soul to such high themes
As most befit an holy worshipper
At nature's inmost shrine ; and feeding thence
Thy natural cheerfulness with those fair forms
That move in peaceful gladness on the earth,
Or float like golden vapors through the air,
Mutely, yet not without significance.

Thy lot was hard, benevolent Old Man !
Thou of the quiet eye and frolic tongue !

Most hard indeed ! Within the city pent,
That huge and troublous city, thou didst walk
A cheerless exile from thine own bright land.
There thy soul sickened at man's selfishness :
Thy heart recoiled upon itself ; for men
Knew not the language that it spake : they spurned
Those striving hopes and phantasies and loves,
Which were thy real world ; for thou hadst been
A priest in nature's temple, while the crowd
Were hurrying on to those dull, clamorous halls,
Where cold suspicion hath usurped the throne,
The ancient throne of wisdom, and hath taught
Her baneful lessons of distrust and hate,
And severed all our old ancestral bonds,
Whereby deep social love was symbolized,
And in the bosom of our social state
Somewhat of moral grandeur was detained.

All this was heavy on thee, mild Old Man !
A mournful gloom was round thy spirit hung,
Of which the dusky veil of that great town
Were no inapt resemblance : yet not so
Wert thou a man to shun the company

Of thy less gifted brethren ; though thy soul
Yearned for the open fields and liberal air
To wander, fancy's freeman. As the sun,
That struggles all day long with autumn fogs,
Shrouds in a misty mantle his bright form,
Then darts his evening splendors far and wide
O'er hill and dale ; so from thy spirit's gloom
A native gaiety of heart broke forth
With a most happy lustre, which dispelled
The clouds of sadness gathered on thy brow.

But no man hath a lot of unmixed ill ;
And thou hadst surely much of tranquil mirth,
And many quaint enjoyments, shared by none,
And instincts of a wisely wayward kind,
And ill-assorted sympathies, from whose
Strange medley thou couldst moral order bring.
Thine was a quiet heart ; clear thoughtfulness
Was visible upon that open brow.
For kindly nature never did forget
Her worshipper, but sent unto his soul,
Ay, even in the jostling of the streets,
Impulses, such as on the mountain tops

In early youth he had received, or felt
In wandering amid forest sanctities,
When not a leaf in the green depths was stirred.
Thus, as he walked along the crowded streets,
He was not of the crowd,—as many more
Perchance were not, by hopeless love assailed,
Or by fresh sorrow severed from the herd,
Or holy errand. For all-powerful love,
Grandeur, and her twin-sister beauty, there
Were with him. From her ancient classic haunts
Ideal grace was summoned to attend.
And, whereso'er he moved, voices and forms,
Voices most deeply musical, and forms
Of dazzling brightness, fell on his pleased ear
And floated in calm pomp before his eyes.

And he was thankful too for many a gift
Which nature ministered in that dull town :
Green trees in nooks where green trees should
not be,

The sun upon the high housetops, the vanes
Of the tall churches struck with merry rays,
Bright creatures in a region of their own—

The bubbling of cold water, and the gleam,
Half sad, half sunny, of the morning Thames.
Nay, we have that within ourselves, from which
We can create the world without,—wherewith
Sorrow doth make her hills and trees and streams,
And joy and hope their other hills and streams.

Oh happy, thus companioned as thou wert,
Thus visited, thus solaced, thus endowed !
How shall I liken thee, kind spirit ! thou
A separated being among men,
A foreigner among wild squares and streets,
And raised on high above the ebb and flow
Of city life ! Upon the crowded quays,
Where hearts are turned to stones, still visited
By feelings and by thoughts that come from far
And are eternal, in the which a seed
Of infinite, substantial life is laid,—
Unrecognized thou still didst walk along.
Once I remember when the breathing land
Was ringing with the early voice of spring,
The valleys still in night's most sable hues
Were steeped, but one huge, awful peak, that stood

A kingly eminence above the rest,
I then beheld all diademed with light,
Crowned with the sunrise, marvellously crowned ;
And clouds with yellow hems hung round its brow,
Vestments of the unseen ambassadors
From the great sun to earth : so too wert thou :
Thou hadst mysterious messages and songs
Come to thee from a distant realm of dreams ;
And delicate creations from thee sprung
Graceful and radiant as the clouds at dawn.

Farewell, Old Man ! For I may call thee old,
Though time's soft, onward flight had not yet
reached

The limit of our days. The seasons four,
That on the shining pathway of the year
Glide forward in their magical array,
Had many moons to fill before the term
Named for the life of man. Still thou wert old,
Agèd before the time with such old age
As the sick heart best knows, when chilling frosts
Have nipped the bud that promised once so much,
And struck the trustful blossom from the bough.

Years onward fly ; but what heart heeds the flight ?
It keeps its own sad calendar, and marks
Its powers grow dull, its feelings intermit.
May I not call *him* old, who called his life
A dream, and yet outlived that dream ? Who lived
In a fair land of visions, and whose eye
Saw that fair land no more ? Was *he* not old ?

I dare not to regret thee, mild Old Man !
For a cold void was in thy heart ; and thou
Didst vainly strive by means not sanctified
To win oblivion of thy lot. A cloud
Passed on thy gentle spirit ; thou didst yearn
To make thy blood run boundingly again,
And oft didst catch in weak-willed eagerness
At the receding, many-colored veil
That severed the hard-featured world and thee.
Surely upon thy spirit there had come,
As on a little child, fresh in the world,
Curious perplexity from sights and sounds,
A consciousness thou didst not see aright.
But now thou sleepest in the dewy earth,
And He Who suffered for thee bids us hope

With a consoling faith that all is well.

Farewell, meek Heart! Great Nature's voice
is heard,

And all the thousand strings of her deep lyre,
Sounding a dirge-like song : low-breathing winds
Are making plaintive music in the woods,
And the clouds cluster round the bleak hill-tops
In stately sorrow, bidding man lament
In cheerful awe, and put more trust in God !

III.

In the Scheldt.

I.

We lay in the dreary Scheldt all night
With a bleak south-wester blowing,
And we talked of ghosts by the fitful light
Of the wood-fire redly glowing.

II.

I could not sleep, for very deep
The words sunk in my spirit;
And at that hour tales had power
Above their own true merit.

III.

The waves were high on the sandbanks nigh,
And the dismal river flowing,
And a muttering sound from the swampy ground
Like the murmur of babes was blowing;
And the only mirth of the household earth
Were the cocks in Flushing crowing.

IV.

I cannot boast that a white wan ghost
To me seems an idle error ;
For deep in me, as the deep, deep sea
Are the fountains of holy terror.

V.

I knew when I heard the stormy bird
All round about us crying,
That spirits strong were riding along
To the beds of sinners dying.

VI.

O Angels bright ! what an angry night
Is this for the powers of evil ;
And thousands there in the blustering air
Are keeping unholy revel.

VII.

The good might cross themselves for fear,
As they heard the seabirds yelling,
And the chattering voicelike sounds that came
On the breath of the tempest swelling.

VIII.

Though well they know good Angels go
The Saints from harm to cover,
And by their beds around their heads
With wings of glory hover.

IX.

O may they keep us in our sleep
To-night on this savage river,
And, for their office' sake, our limbs
From the spirits of ill deliver!

IV.

To my Indian Sister.

I.

A BLESSING on thee, Sister dear !
A blessing ! whether far or near,
In city bright or desert drear
Thy path may lie,
Since we may not detain thee here
Beneath our sky.

II.

Yet ah ! that thou with us couldst be !
For England's homes are fair to see,
And most our northern homes to me
All brightly shine—
Still brighter when enjoyed with thee
Sweet love ! and thine.

III.

Each season has its tale to tell,
Like pleasant chimes upon a bell ;
And memory feeds on what befell
In days departed,
When thou wert laughing, bright, and well,
And careless-hearted.

IV.

The summer came with leafy May,
And sweetly sunk the summer day
On ruined Finchale's abbey grey
And its tall woods,
And brightly did the sunbeams play
On Weare's wild floods.

V.

And holy Durham's minster fair
A crown of yellow rays did wear,
And we beheld with rapture there,
By sunset's powers
Transfigured in the radiant air,
The two west towers.

VI.

O seldom, seldom upon earth
Doth one short evening bring to birth
Such innocence and yet such mirth,
As then were mine :
I never knew a light heart's worth
Till I knew thine !

VII.

Oft on the mind a day like this
Rests with a moonlight thought of bliss,
Softly as lies a mother's kiss
On childhood's brow :
I little thought how I should miss
My sister now !

VIII.

God bless thy little ones and thee,
And blessèd may thy True Love be !
Far as thou art across the sea,
My prayers shall rise,—
Prayers that shall bring thee back to see
Our English skies !

V.

On Openfell.

I.

YOUNG Lionel of Skelwith Bridge
A suitor is ; and on the fell
One sweet May night near Iron Kell
I met him where the ridge

II.

Drops down to Brathay o'er the lea :
The guise in which he did unlade
His love unto a little maid
A moral read to me.

III.

“ Ah dearest ! do not deem me rude,
If I have turned my head aside
Nor to thy loving words replied
In this hill solitude.

IV.

“ Darkness all round us deeply presses ;
No starlight wavers to the earth,
No breeze is born of moonlight mirth
To part night’s cloudy tresses.

V.

“ No sound comes to us from the steep,
No watercourse is speaking now ;
The very nightbirds on the bough
Forget themselves and sleep.

VI.

“ The sky above of gloomiest blue
Doth seem to pause above the heath,
And, lest it wake some grassy breath,
Withholds her gift of dew.

VII.

“ Silence herself sweet sound desires,
And with her heavy hush is mingling
Somewhat of an impatient tingling
Like chords of shaken lyres.

VIII.

“ Poor echo round each hollow stone
In this dark desert space is feeling
For every noise that might come stealing
For her to feed upon.

IX.

“ Thou with thy words my name didst twine,
My Christian name, a sound the sweetest,
And of all names for echo meetest
When breathed by lips like thine.

X.

“ I heard the stir thy whispers made,
And paused to see if on the heath
Echo would find that wandering breath,—
Half glad and half afraid.

XI.

“ I thought perchance my name might wake
In airy places echo's soul,
The dull-eyed midnight to console
With sounds from bush and brake.

XII.

“ And yet I had a fluttering fear,
Lest wicked echo on the air
To all the lakes my name should bear,
And tell that we were here.

XIII.

“ First it would have a rocky sound,
And then a trembling leafy tone,
And harsh again by rugged stone,
And up from underground.

XIV.

“ And so from wood and heath and hollow,
Striking in single notes and double,
With babbling speed the breezy trouble
Cliff-side and brook would follow.

XV.

“ And, ere the dawn could dapple heaven,
Old maids and boys might catch the tale,
From Harter Fell to Ennerdale,
From Bassenthwaite to Leven.

XVI.

“ Yet what did peevish echo do ?
She sate on every heap of stone,
And let those syllables alone,
As they went floating through.”

XVII.

Now up the river came a gleam,
And, as the tardy moon was rising,
I murmured silently, advising
Myself as well as them,—

XVIII.

What thing less heeded can ye find
Than all mankind by lovers twain ?
Let echo teach you, maid and swain,—
The lovers by mankind !

VI.

To a Friend.

FIRST love is self-love : a thin shade that starts
From out ourselves, its dreamy joys the brood
Of base will-worship, that in restless hearts
Doth crave to have the loss of youth made good.
First love too oft is love without esteem
Or mutual honor, seeking in a wife
No help, no shelter, but a soothing beam
To minister a sunshine to our life :—
The growth of one wild hour ! and thereof come
Dull-hearted unions and a listless home.
I have known men to whom it hath been given
To make one shipwreck on love's rocky coast,
And they have lived to teach, as though from
 heaven,
That he is blest whose first-love hath been crossed.

VII.

Courtship.

SOMEWHAT of wildness and of weak untruth
And fond abstraction surely may be borne,
Not without ready pardon, in a youth
Who hath but for awhile his fetters worn.
For the hot blood of youth hath laws : mayhap
The seeds of married faith are often cast
Upon this surge of hopes, and in the lap
Of vernal love may take true root at last.
Yet courtship is the unshapely element
Whence the deep power of chaste affection still
Must calmly be evoked, till it fulfil
The end and nature of a sacrament,
And sanctify both spirits from above
To be meet vessels of parental love.

VIII.

The Winter River.

Low spirits are a sin,—a penance given
To over-talking and unthoughtful mirth.
There is nor high nor low in holiest heaven,
Nor yet in hearts where heaven hath hallowed
earth.

Still there are some whose growth is won in strife,
And who can bear hot suns through all their life :
But rather for myself would I forego
High tides of feeling and brief moods of power,
Than share those languors with the showy flower,
Which the shade-loving herb doth never know.
O Brathay ! wisely in thy winter grounds,
Wisely and sweetly are thy currents chiming,
Thus happily to every season timing
The same low waters and the same low sounds.

IX.

Written during Illness at Constantinople.

FAR o'er green barren Thrace the sun had set
In stormy red : upon a couch of pain,
Listening the dripping of the dismal rain,—
Over the mighty city, dark and wet,
I heard the countless Turkish Ezans swell,
Bidding the vespers of the infidel
With long, harsh wail from viewless minaret.
The Cross lies hard upon my fevered brow
And aching frame ; and slumber's pleasant spell
Is backward o'er my restless limbs to creep.
Yet from that Ezan have I learned but now
That prayer is sevenfold more sweet than sleep.
Then shall I count these little pains a loss
Which thus can make the Crescent preach the
Cross ?

X.

Girlhood.

FOR A LADY.

I.

WHERE the pinewoods wave,
And the white streams rave,
I came in deepest gloom :
I hated my youth
For its sweet untruth,
And laid it in a tomb.
I pined for a woman's troubled morrow,
And wept, ay, wept for the want of sorrow.

II.

Where the pinewoods wave,
And the white streams rave,

I came when I was old :

For the jar of life

Is a gladdening strife

Which makes not woman cold.

I had buried my youth hasty and erring,—

Oh ! have buried days a disinterring ?

III.

But the pinewoods waved,

And the white streams raved,—

They told me in my need,

That softness and feeling

Were not soul-healing,

And so it was decreed

That the marvellous flowers of woman's duty

Should grow on the grave of buried beauty.

XI.

44

The Beginning of Term.

DEAR Oxford ! far in hollow hills,
And kept awake by flooded rills,
This night I hear the many feet
That pace thy steeple-shadowed street,
The tide of youth in merry going
Beneath the college windows flowing :
And strange, most strange it seems to me
At such an hour far off to be.
I miss the evening thronged with greeting,
The tumult of the autumnal meeting,
When every face is fresh of hue,
As though its life began anew.
I almost wonder not to hear
Some chosen voices speaking near.

My very hand the air doth grasp
In pressure kind or burning clasp :
While with a pleasant, solemn strain
The chapel bell wakes up again.
And still to my believing eyes
St. Mary's shadow seems to rise,
All gently cast o'er every sense
With its old wonted influence,
Wherewith it hallowed many a night
My ramblings in the cold moonlight,
And thrills of joy and thoughts of good
Were deepened by its neighborhood.

And is it well that I should stand
Apart in this sweet mountain-land ?
Oh ! is it well that I should be
Away from cares that chasten me,
Away from men whose pattern still
Could shame me out of weak self-will,
Away from shrines too which could bless
And nurture me in holiness ?
And is it not a wilful loss
To be unburdened of a Cross ?

And in the life which I am living
Is there no fountain of misgiving ?

Yet, ere I left, the path did seem
Clear as a steady, shining beam ;
And to my vision there were leadings,
And in my spirit there were pleadings,
Which were impressed upon my sense
As very seals of Providence.

Ah ! in a hundred little things,
Like wavings of an Angel's wings,
Far gleamy lights, dim beckonings,
Methought it was in mercy given
To trace the guiding thread of Heaven.

But now my doubting spirit fails,
And from past sin a mist exhales,
Clouding the radiant track which showed,
As then I deemed, the heavenly road.
And every stone, whereon I thought
Some lustrous token had been wrought,
Some bright inscription, surely given
For faith's interpreting from Heaven,—

Though carved with broken letters still,
Appears the work of past self-will.
What did as Angel's foot-prints gleam
Unholy imitations seem ;
And signs, which have not changed, display
Their characters another way,
And every fact the mind can bring
Confirms the new interpreting.

Oh Brother ! when thou fain wouldst range
From place to place, from change to change,
Take not for heavenly light the glow
Self-will can o'er the prospect throw.
Sin is a prophet, who can cast
Unerring light upon the past,
But on the future makes to shine
False sparkles which appear divine.

XII.

A Spring Lesson.

I.

THROUGH all the vale,
The primrose pale
Her yellow spots is showing ;
And by the stream
Green mosses gleam,
Where Scandale Beck is flowing.

II.

Beneath the trees,
In families,
The snow-drops white are shining ;
And through the wood
Full many a bud
Reveals the woodbine twining.

III.

The young fern looks
Like shepherd's crooks,
As though 'twas such a trouble
To force its way
Through stones and clay
That it had bent it double.

IV.

And though no screen
Of leafy green
Protects my happy dwelling,
The naked bough
Hath thickened now,
And bud and branch are swelling :

V.

And it is meant
To weave a tent
Of summer twilight over,
With warp and woof,
And all sun-proof,
Fit haunt for moping lover.

VI.

And from the earth
A steam of mirth
Into the spirit rises,
And sudden Spring
From off her wing
Doth scatter sweet surprises.

VII.

And every hour
In vernal shower
The heart finds meet ablution,
While it receives
Mid buds and leaves
A very absolution.

VIII.

Yet do I mourn
That spring's bright urn
Is no impartial laver,
But still that she
With maiden's glee
Divides her wayward favor.

IX.

For here and there
The uncertain air
Woos blooms from out their cover,
Like amethysts
Upon the wrists
Of one with a rich lover.

X.

And chosen stems
With weight of gems
And forward blossoms labor,
While not a bud
Adorns the wood,
The dull wood of their neighbor.

XI.

We cannot ride
By yon way-side
Among the hawthorns early,
But fancy grieves
O'er spots of leaves
Which spring hath wooed unfairly.

XII.

Yet if we scan
The world of man
In every nook and border,
Where'er we turn
We may discern
The self-same solemn order.

XIII.

Thus in her path
Of love and wrath
Dear Spring our thanks doth merit :
By her meek sign
We may divine
The mystery of the Spirit.

XIII.

Christ the Way.

I.

To sin and earth and sorrow tributary,
We lift our thoughts to thee, O blissful Mary !
The stainless Maid and mightiest Mother ! thou
Wert the mysterious gate where, stooping low,
The King of glory entered, first and last
And only One Who by that portal passed.
To thee our love we offer ; while we pray,
Poor suitors, unto Him Who in thee lay,
That we may walk in His new living Way.

II.

Poor suitors are we to thy Son, O Mary !
Like us to death and sorrow tributary,
But not to sin ; and Who did deign to call
Substance from thee, a Body virginal,

And with the Godhead set it side by side,
For us vouchsafing to be sanctified :
In Person one, of Natures twain : we pray
Poor suitors unto Him Who in thee lay,
That we may walk in His new living Way.

III.

We are environed by the world, O Mary !
Bondsmen, disconsolate and tributary,
Him Who did once environ thy blest womb
We seek to cleave our way from out this gloom :—
He the strayed soul to its Creator lifts,
Replenishing our nature with the gifts
Of His own near Divinity : we pray
Poor suitors unto Him Who in thee lay,
That we may walk in His new living Way.

IV.

We cannot lift ourselves, O blissful Mary !
We to low thoughts, base ends, are tributary :
We cannot lift ourselves unto the height
Of such chaste marvel ; for the abounding light,

From that exalted Human Body given,
Strikes blind the eye too much upraised to Heaven.
Man's nature sits with God : to Him we pray,
To Him Who, God and Man, within thee lay,
That we may walk in His new living Way.

v.

O Mother-Maid ! O fellow-mortal Mary !
Was not thy Son, like mortals, tributary
To hunger and to thirst, to hopes and fears ?
Hath He not sanctified the power of tears,
The beauty and the holiness of weeping ?
Hath He not given back into our keeping
A nature newly consecrated ? Say,
Should we not kneel to Him Who in thee lay,
Thy womb His road, Who is Himself our Way ?

vi.

He who within thee lay, O blissful Mary !
And to a creature's birth was tributary,
Unto the Father yielding back His breath,
Gave Himself up a vassal unto death,

Death's serf, the three-days' bondsman, and the last,
For He hath burst the prison as He passed.
Death hath become transparent : let us pray
To Him Who rent the envious veil away,
Breaking through that dread house a living Way.

VII.

And what high bliss hath not thy son, O Mary !
Made to Eve's fallen house hereditary ?
Man saw Him rise aloft with lucid track,
And by that road man still expects Him back.
Clear across death and paradise are strown
Footprints of light that end but on the Throne
At God's Right Hand. Oh let us fall and pray
With the great Seraphim that kneel all day,
Worshipping Man in God, man's living Way.

VIII.

And as He left thee to His Saint, O Mary,
Pierced with a sword, woe's meekest tributary !
So He bequeathed the Church unto the Spirit
To teach her what great things she doth inherit ;

In which sweet Spirit do we come and go,
We risen with Christ, or He with us below,
Man ever close to God : oh let us pray,
Bending most reverent knees both night and day,
To Him in Whom we stand, our present Way.

IX.

Is not His ancient priesthood, blissful Mary !
A deep yet most untroubled commentary
Upon men's cries and tears by day or night,
Pleading all woes before His Father's sight ?
And for the voiceful Church and poor mute world
Doth he not keep His potent Cross unfurled,
Lengthening its shadow upon sin ? O pray
Unto the Priest Who ministereth all day,
Making His Flesh man's Shelter and his Way.

X.

He is the Priest of priests, O blissful Mary !
Whose earthly types with right hereditary,
As on the bosom of an unstained sea
Reflect His Priesthood in the Mystery

Of the dread Altar, giving Flesh for food,
Pouring into the frame from urn of Blood
The power of resurrection : let us pray
To Him Whose Five Benignant Wounds all day
Stand open to the Church, an awful Way.

XI.

He is our Way, our dreadest Way, O Mary !
(May He remember me His tributary !)
Our dreadest Way ; for it is only given
Through His great Judgment-Seat to enter
Heaven—

Judgment according to our works ! the creed
Could not be borne were not the Judge indeed
A Man of thy true substance : let us pray
Unto the Virgin's Son that in His Day
We perish not by that most fiery Way.

XII.

O whitest Flower ! O ever-blessèd Mary !
To what high purpose wert thou tributary !
How wert thou chosen for the stainless Birth,
Mother of God ! chaste Lily of the earth !

To thee our love we offer, meekly fleeing
From all bold thought of thy mysterious being.
All prayers are to thine honor which we pray
To Him Who, God and Man, within thee lay,
Thy womb His Road, Who is Himself our Way !

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XIV.

The Easter Guest.

I.

DEAR Mother ! from the sacred cell
Where the departed spirits dwell,
Mysteriously blest,
A gentle shadow, by my side
For one whole day at Easter-tide,
Thou dost with thy poor orphan bide,
A true though speechless Guest.

II.

Dear Shade ! at dawn thou dost not come,
The hour when Jesus from the Tomb

Went in the twilight grey :
Thou comest not at sunrise fair,
And, when to breathe bright Easter air
I leave my bed, thou art not there,—
Thou hast not found the way.

III.

Softly, sweet Presence ! dost thou steal
To me, when all the people kneel
With heart and hand prepared ;
When, on the Mysteries intent,
We see the veil between us rent,
Shewing the way that Jesus went,—
Then is thy house unbarred.

IV.

And straightway thou art at my side,
As when, one long past Easter-tide
I knelt, a cowering boy,
And thou my little hand didst bare,
Taking the glove which I did wear,
Trembling, entranced, oblivious there
With awe, deep awe and joy.

V.

Dear Mother ! through the long, long year
I never think without a tear
Of thee so soon departed ;
And, weariest penance ! all the things
Which memory from her storehouse brings
Are seeds of bitter thought, and stings
Which keep me broken-hearted.

VI.

I mark thy sadly wondering look,
When in a passion-fit I spoke
Harsh words into thine ears ;
When thou, a sufferer on life's brink,
Waitedst to weep till thou didst think
I should not see thy spirit drink
Its greedy draught of tears.

VII.

O Mother ! Mother ! with what pain
I crave thy presence back again
Thy pardon so to get !

For mine is now a growing sorrow,
Which doth, alas ! for ever borrow
From every change and every morrow
New sources of regret.

VIII.

But this one day when thou dost come
From out thy spiritual home,
The Patriarch's mystic Breast,
What other feelings hast thou brought !
With what a cheeering softness fraught !
What store, good store, of filial thought
Hath come with thee, dear Guest !

IX.

From out thy presence thou dost pour
A healing quiet on my sore,
The calm of pardon won,
And a bright cloud of memories
Doth from the genial past arise,
Bringing sweet trouble in my eyes,
From thoughts of duty done.

X.

Mother ! the long, long year I mourn ;
But thy mute presence is an urn,
Replenished from above,
Whence yearly there distils a dower
Of deep absolving peace, a shower
Of benediction,—right and power
For penitential love.

✓
XV.

The One Want.

I.

ONE thing is wanting, one bright thing of earth,
To fill the cup of life unto the brim,
The measure and completion of my mirth,
For lack of which days tarnish and grow dim.

II.

O earth ! O world ! O life ! ye should have bred
For one like me more sorrow, pain, and fears ;
Whereas from you, as from a flowery bed,
Hath breath, like incense, breathed for twenty years.

III.

Wherefore have ye forsworn your nature so ?
For brittle wills, like mine, have need of stern
And hardy baptisms, which can only flow
From where pale sorrow bends upon her urn.

IV.

Why should I blame? Ye do your best ; ye give
What ye can give ; and still my heart goes free—
Gay thing ! it makes the world in which I live,
And it is bright, too bright a world for me.

V.

One thing is wanting to me, one bright thing,
The which being absent I am poor indeed ;—
It is my Mother's life, to be a spring
Of a more virtuous gladness which I need.

VI.

One thing is wanting in the beamy cup
Of my young life, one thing to be poured in ;
Ay, and one thing is wanting to fill up
The measure of proud joy, and make it sin.

VII.

Through all my life have I been saved by this,
This one thing wanting ; it hath been the thorn
Which kept me calm when I had plucked a bliss
From some sweet branch,—one leaf was ever torn.

VIII.

I have been happy, and am happy now,
Yet do I crave the most when happiest;
For the cold sense of my one want doth grow
In the proportion wherein I am blest.

IX.

At the dread Altar, when I might lose sight
Of my unworthiness amid the stir
Of high and swelling thoughts, it is a blight
To pride, that I can be no priest to her.

X.

In the rare moods when I have given birth
To songs *her* memory would have loved to treasure,
That she is absent mars the rising mirth,
Timing my heart to this life's sober measure.

XI.

When I have walked half giddy on the ledge
To which men's praise, like tempters, souls will bear,
The want, the single want, hath been the wedge,
Cleaving my soul for Heaven to enter there.

XII.

Thus in still nights, in every loneliest haunt
Thou, sainted Mother! thou hast rescued me :
Daily the Cross hath saved me by a want,
And that one want was aye the want of thee.

XVI.

Rydal Vale. I.

It was the earliest evening of the spring ;
The hills with vernal green were gently flushed,
And every sound about the place was hushed,
Except the blue lake softly murmuring.
The glow of sunset came there, dusk and rosy ;
I met a little child in Rydal vale,
With a huge bunch of daffodils, a posy
Large as the child herself, who was but frail,
And hot with climbing ; and in all the rills,
With both hands clasped, she dipped her daffodils ;
And ever as she walked she loved to wipe
Her face with those wet flowers, and it did please
Her simple heart to hear the thrushes pipe,
And she would look for them among the trees.

XVII.

Rydal Vale. II.

THOU wilt be long in reaching home, my love !
If thou dost tarry all the joys to take,
Crowded this evening about Rydal lake,—
The new-born lambs, the flowers, the cooing dove.
Nay, wherefore grasp thy daffodils so fast ?
I am not one to rob thee : thou hast wrought
So deeply in my heart that thou hast brought
Sweet gifts of tears unto me from the past.
My sainted Mother ! was I once like this,
A creature overflowed with simple bliss,
One whom thou might'st have seen by these
 bright rills
Long years ago when thou wert in this place,
Stooping to cool his little health-flushed face,
So wondrous happy with his daffodils ?

XVIII.

The Wounded Lamb.

I SAW a shepherd with a wounded lamb,
Which he had found in pain and almost dead
Among the blue stones upon Rydal Head,
Where, plaintive tenant of the moor, the dam
With sorrow in her large round eyes was left,
Of that white, gleaming creature now bereft.
The village children gathered in a ring,
Doubtful, as round some disenchanted spell :
For three days they had seen it wandering
A bodily sunbeam on the rocky fell.
It puzzles them to think that on the morrow
That patch of light will not be up on high ;
Yet do they love it more, for common sorrow
Begets in wonder's stead sweet sympathy.

XIX.

A Cottager's Child.

I MET a child, and kissed it : who shall say
I stole a joy in which I had no part ?
The happy creature from that very day
Hath felt the more his little human heart.
Now when I pass he runs away and smiles,
And tries to seem afraid with pretty wiles.
I am a happier and a richer man,
Since I have sown this new joy in the earth :
'Tis no small thing for us to reap stray mirth
In every sunny wayside where we can.
It is a joy to me to be a joy
Which may in the most lowly heart take root ;
And it is gladness to that little boy
To look out for me at the mountain foot.

XX.

Sunday.

I.

THERE is a Sabbath won for us,
A Sabbath stored above,
A service of eternal calm,
An altar-rite of love.

II.

There is a Sabbath won for us,
Where we shall ever wait
In mute or voiceful ministries
Upon The Immaculate.

III.

There shall transfigured souls be filled
With Christ's Eternal Name,
Dipped, like bright censers, in the sea
Of molten glass and flame ¹.

¹ Rev. xv. 2.

IV.

Yet set not in thy thoughts too far
Our Heaven and Earth apart,
Lest thou should'st wrong the Heaven begun
Already in thy heart.

V.

Though Heaven's above and Earth's below,
Yet are they but one state,
And each the other with sweet skill
Doth interpenetrate.

VI.

Yea, many a tie and office blest,
In earthly lots uneven,
Hath an immortal place to fill
And is a root of Heaven.

VII.

And surely Sundays bright and calm,
So calm, so bright as this,
Are tastes imparted from above
Of higher sabbath bliss.

VIII.

We own no gloomy ordinance,
No weary Jewish day,
But weekly Easters, ever bright
With pure domestic ray ;

IX.

A feast of thought, a feast of sight,
A feast of joyous sound,
A feast of merry hearts, at rest,
From labor's wheel unbound ;

X.

A day of such homekeeping bliss
As on the poor may wait
With all such lower joys as best
Befit his human state.

XI.

He sees among the hornbeam boughs
The little sparkling flood ;
The mill-wheel rests, a quiet thing
Of black and mossy wood.

XII.

He sees the fields lie in the sun,
He hears the plovers crying ;
The plough and harrow, both upturned,
Are in the furrows lying.

XIII.

In simple faith he may believe
That earth's diurnal way
Doth, like its blessed Maker, pause
Upon this hallowed day.

XIV.

And should he ask, the happy man !
If Heaven be aught like this :—
'Tis Heaven within him, breeding there
The love of quiet bliss.

XV.

Oh leave the man, my fretful friend !
To follow nature's ways,
Nor breathe to him that Christian feasts
Are no true holydays.

XVI.

Is Earth to be as nothing here
When we are sons of Earth?
May not the body and the heart
Share in the spirit's mirth?

XVII.

When thou hast cut each earthly hold
Whereto his soul may cling,
Will the poor creature left behind
Be more a heavenly thing?

XVIII.

Heaven fades away before our eyes,
Heaven fades within our heart,
Because in thought our Heaven and Earth
Are cast too far apart.

XXI.

Christ Church Meadow.

ERE Advent bells the Church are calling
Her Bridegroom to discover,
Or autumn's fast and silent falling
Of her sere leaves is over,
In joyous gloom and saddest mirth
We turn our thronging thoughts from earth,
And stay our pilgrim feet,
Two days by Shrine and Porch to wait
All Saints and Souls to celebrate
With calmest honors meet.
One day, the college matins ended,
With reverent care I put away
 The garb of white,
 The vestment bright,
Which marks the Christian holyday,
And through the sunny streets I wended.

I walked within a meadow, where
The willow tops were burnished fair
With cold November's windy gleams,
And watched two green and earthy streams
Along the white frost-beaded grass
With their leaf-laden waters pass.

And bright rose the towers
Through the half-stripped bowers,
And the sun on the windows danced :
The churches looked white
In the morning light,

And the gilded Crosses glanced.
Methought, as I gazed on yon holy pile,
Statue and moulding and buttress bold
Seemed pencilled with flame, and burning the while
Like the shapes in a furnace of molten gold.
As the fire sank down or glowed anew,
The fretted stones of the fabric grew
So thin that the eye might pierce them through,
Till statue and moulding and buttress bold,
And each well-known figure and carving old,
Peeled off from their place in the turret hoar,
Like the winter bark from a sycamore,

And dropped away as the misty vest
That morning strips from the mountain's breast :
And as the earthly building fell,
That was so old and strong,
Clear glowed the Church Invisible
Which had been veiled so long.
And in the midst there rose a Mount,
The greenest verdure showing ;
And from the summit many a fount
In emerald streaks was flowing,
And each within its mossy bed,
Most like a soft and silver thread,
In wavy curves was glowing.
And gathered there about a Throne,
Raised high upon a Cloven Stone,
A crowd of worshippers there stood,
Like sea-side sands for multitude.
All were in snowy vests arrayed,
All bore a green and juicy blade
Fresh broken from the palm ;
All looked as though some powerful thought
Had o'er a myriad features brought

One fixed and breathing calm ;
As mountains in the starry blue,
Quiet and waiting for the dew,
With yielding line and softened hue
Acknowledge midnight's balm.
A light of sun and moonbeam blent
Was o'er those myriads thrown,
In steady radiance from the rent
Within the Cloven Stone.
From north and south, from land and sea,
Came that transfigured company,
And East and West together sat,
As though they did expectant wait
For some high ritual ;
So noiseless were they far and near,
One might the emerald fountains hear
In their moss-stifled fall.

There rose a man from out the crowd ¹,
Who chanted solemnly and loud

¹ All Saints' Day. 2 Morning Lesson. Heb. xi. v. 33. & xii. to v. 7. For the Epistle, Rev. vii. 2. Gospel, St. Matt. v. 1.

A recitation of all woes,
And agonies and mortal throes,
 And tortures dire
 By sword and fire,
And bitter pains and monstrous things
For torment used by savage kings ;
And still between each word there came
A trumpet's brazen cry,
And from the throng a loud acclaim
Rung through the hollow sky.
Then from the east an Angel flew,
In snowy garb with fringe of blue ¹,
And in his arrowy flight he bore
A wondrous Signet-Ring,
And he charged other Angels four,
Who then the green earth hovered o'er,
And the dim ocean's shining shore,
To hurt no living thing.
And there, apart, he set a seal
On the twelve tribes of Israel ;

¹ Numbers xv. 38.

But when he to the crowd advanced,
The sun so full and brightly glanced
Upon their glistening dress,
And then they waved their palms on high
With such a rending jubilant cry,
And in one mighty press

 Around the man

 Together ran,

While on the air upborne,
A thousand skirts of waving white
Gleamed like the flocks of cloudlets bright
In sunny air at morn,—

 So that to me

The sparkling pageant did but seem
All like a whitely-flashing dream

 Of silver sea.

But now all hushed and silent grown
Within the mystic place,
Prostrate before the Cloven Stone
They lie upon their face.

And, like still waters, from the rent

A Voice, once heard on earth, was sent

Unto the mountain side ;
Nine times It rose, nine times It fell,
Nine times in blessing did It swell,
And without echo died.
Now through the wavy rings of fire
Uprose the sweet transparent spire
A visionary thing ;
Then mid the uncertain silvery flood
Half vision and half building stood
In the sunlight quivering ;
Then on the turrets' fretted face
Each statue grew in its old place,
And through some leafless branches near
Once more the church-clock did appear,
And in a keen November gilding
St. Mary's stood, an earthly building.

Ah ! thus at times on earth below
The Church Invisible will glow
Upon our mortal sight,
And mid the rude and jangling strife
The holy Altar's hidden life
Breathes out in heavenly light.

O doubtful Churchman ! if to thee
Thy Mother's charter blotted be,
Make thou this day a vow with me
Never in keen-witted strife
To ask or tell of Christian life ;
Nor strive to read in wordy war
What should be seen in prayer from far,
Or on its viewless mission sent
Couched in some blessèd Sacrament.
The empty forms, opaque and still,
No mirthful light are giving,
They wait for us of backward will
The vessels of the Church to fill
With true ascetic living.
If from our English Mother's breast,
With angry trouble now distressed,
Scant nourishment is given,
If few and doubtful shadows rest,
By universal rites confessed,
On her from out of Heaven,—
Enough remains in truth to be
A very Heaven in you and me.

As angry breezes mar and break
The evening sky within the lake,
If rude division so have jarred
Her holy Font, they have not marred
The virtue of the water ;
And freshness from the mystic seas
Of grace above by our true Keys
At morn and eve is brought her ;
And she has still her gifts divine
Abiding on her eastern Shrine.
And if a pillar of bright cloud,
With indistinctness luminous,
Her awful features somewhat shroud,
It is in tenderness to us.
O if thou envy the sweet graces
Of Holy Church in foreign places,
The forms bequeathed from elder days,
The incense of the ancient ways,
And the bright shades of Heaven that fall
On her capacious ritual,—
And if to thee in feverish dream,
Through what cold men have been undoing

Our island Church may haply seem
A chapel reared within a ruin,—
For thy sins' sake—for love of her—
O wander not, nor dare to stir
From our right home, but let it be
Thy true and only chivalry
With patriot sympathy to bide
Calm at our English Mother's side.

XXII.

The Earth's Heart.

I.

THERE is a pulse in flowing streams,
A calmly throbbing motion,
A heart in the cold mountain springs
As true as that of ocean.

II.

Sit by yon bay where Rothay comes
With merry sparkling fall
To rest within the glossy pool
Beneath the fern-fringed wall ;

III.

And see how like a real tide,
Encroaching and retreating,
Upon the polished gravel bed
The uneven stream is beating.

IV.

As if, although 'twas flowing down,
Straight on it could not flow,
But it must stay to breathe in pools,
Like some poor hunted roe.

V.

And at the river-head the lake
From its blue hollows ever,
A weary, tremulous, panting thing,
Is sighing forth the river.

VI.

And thus the breath of the huge hills,
Among wet mosses sobbing,
Works alway through the upland springs
With momentary throbbing.

VII.

And on the drear autumnal days,
When o'er the naked heath
The wind is riding, still it hath
A palpitating breath.

VIII.

And in the woods the evening air
A breathing spirit dwells,
Still cooing like a turtle dove,
A shy voice in the dells.

IX.

Those dazzling things, the waterfalls,
That leap with such a cry
In leafy clefts, sink down at times
Into a woodland sigh.

X.

Like one whose heart is in his mouth,
Swift echo on the heath
Speeds onward, shedding broken words,
A runner out of breath.

XI.

I speak not of the heaving sea,
But of the solemn earth,
I would thou should'st believe there is
A heart in all her mirth.

XII.

The dashing rivers are her joy,
The pinewood plaint her sadness,
The clamorous tempest is her rage,
The earthquake is her madness.

XIII.

The past is in her,—the long past,
With all its light and gloom,
What wonder then there should be throes
In such a teeming womb?

XIV.

Her heart grows larger, as each day
Sinks to it with a stir;
It makes me grave to think of all
That hath gone into her:

XV.

Proudminded kings and villain priests,
And, by the will of fate,
Enough to make another earth
Of love unfortunate.

XVI.

Then, when thou walkest on the hills
Or in the woods apart,
Remember that the earth hath got
Almost a human heart.

XVII.

The joy and grief of centuries
Have so much dark and bright
That they constrain earth's pulse to beat
Alternate day and night.

XVIII.

Sweet Alice! when thy blameless past
Shall enter this old earth,
The world will find, and know not why,
More calmness in her mirth.

XXIII.

My World.

I AM a chronicler of little things,—

Comings and goings, children's words and ways,
Chance guests, new hosts, and single happy days,
And household legends. These have been the
springs

Of much of my best knowledge: I have striven
To make my narrow homely world a glass,
Where shapes and shadows, like a breath, might
pass,

Dimly reflecting motions out of Heaven.

And sometimes things have so encountered things
As to eclipse each other,—moving rings
Which meet and intersect, chilling all mirth
When they awhile the wondering household draw
Beneath the shadow of some mighty law,
In circle calm revolving round the earth.

XXIV.

The Death of Richard's Tree.

WATERPARK, CONISTON.

WHY comest thou to me, young questioner,
Why comest thou with sorrow-stricken look?
Of what dread omen in old nature's book
Enquirest thou the meaning from the seer?
From out yon sapless tree thy mother earth
Speaks to thee, Child, and with no voice of mirth.
Life grows around thee and upon thee, deep
And broad and mighty; and the time hath come
When childhood pure can be no more a home,
A covert where the soul may hide and sleep.
Yet—for the tree still stands—this comfort take;
Thou shalt keep childhood's heart with manhood's
soul;
There shall be pauses from life's stern control
When thou shalt hear the old mirth of the lake.

XXV.

On a Child, who suffered from Fits.

No sooner cast upon the sounding beach
From the dim sea where unborn spirits are,
But, with malignest influence touched, the fair
And glorious soul was drawn beyond our reach.
We search for thy great spirit, Brother, where
In the dull distant caverns of thy being
The stricken thing may haply now be fleeing
Before some awful sights, or in some snare
Caught trembling, all unconscious we are nigh.
But sight and sound shall couch thy spirit's eye :
In thy wild mirth and outbursts of rude glee
We shall behold thee daily set aside
The withs the Dark One hath around thee tied,
Bidding some portion of thyself go free.

XXVI.

The Dog.

GRIEF for her absent master in her wrought,
So I in pity took her out with me,
Though I would fain have walked alone to be
Less hindered in the current of my thought :
And then I threw her sticks for which she ran ;—
Who would not cheer a sorrow when he can ?
After some miles we met at twilight pale
A neighbor of her master's passing by,
And with blythe demonstration in her eye
She turned and followed him along the vale.
So I walked on, companioned by the moon,
Well pleased that even a casual form or feature
Of the old times was dearer to the creature
Than the new friend of one bright afternoon.

XXVII.

The Snowy Mountain.

A DOMESTIC POEM.

A STUDENT out of doors, where mountain winds,
With voices deepened by the raving brooks,
Inspire into the lassitude of thought
Somehat of vernal buoyancy, I went
To a calm haunt, while overhead sweet spring
An airy cloister diligently roofed.
I was in my peculiar, sheltered walk
Among the beeches and the laurels: there,
In meditation utterly immured,
Chewing the luscious prunings of sweet bay,
I troubled my poor self with Charlemagne,
Otho, Conrad the Salic, and the tribe
Of great bad men, who made and shaped the earth

We live upon to-day. Why should a heart,
Begirt with trees and streams and cawing rooks,
And with a tent of bluest sky above,
Amid the jocund images that grow
Of the blythe present, fret about the past,
Stirring the silent bones of emperors
And dusty banners of old paladins ?

Bewildered more and more, I walked and walked,
And still light would not rise, thought would not
come,

Clear, steady thought ; the German Empire lay
A nightmare on my mind ; when with rude shock
From out a bush my little favorite boy
By stealth leaped on me, clinging to my coat,
And uttering a most victorious cry.

His face was flushed, his bonnet laid aside,
His long brown hair disordered by his play,
And in his eyes there glimmered the sly light
Of merriment, half weary of itself,
Flagging and spent with an excess of joy.
Mornings are long to children : he was tired
With running, and as much with resting too,

Among the daisies and the buttercups
That were enamelling the April field.
These were the cares which fretted him, as great,
I doubt not, and substantial as the wealth,
The power, the fame, the barren scholarship,
Wherein we grown-up children spend our strength.
It may be that in nature's honest eye
A knot of wild-flowers are of truer worth
Than the old German State, or any dream
From which the world has wakened : for the
 flower
Is a pure growth of heavenly love, a thing
Unblamed by Him Who made it.

 He was tired,
And bitterly complained of the strange heat
So early in the year : the April sun
Among our lofty hills is all unused
To such reproach ; he should have rather blamed
The heat of his own restless happiness.
Yet wherefore were the things without us made,
(So reason childish hearts, or rather act
As if they reasoned so) except to bear

The blame most due to that which is within ?

“ There is no heat, my little boy,” said I ;

“ Thy head is reeling with the open air

“ And breathing grass and the new glossy leaves

“ And all the sunny aspect of the hills :

“ The power of spring hath made thee drunk, my
child,

“ With its brisk spirit poured into thy veins

“ After long months of cold within the house

“ Among thy playthings, wearisome through use :

“ But sunshine is an unabated joy

“ Which neither use nor frequency make dull.”

So spake I, rambling in a thoughtful strain

Which the child understood not, but once more

Cried out against fair April for its heat.

“ Come then with me,” said I, “ I told thee once

“ That there was nothing nature could not do,

“ Ay, nothing nature would not do, for those

“ Who love her as they ought, that she would bring

“ New playthings and old sunshine every day.

“ Now let us speak to the maternal earth ;

“ She ever answers *me* when I do speak.”

I took him by the hand, and he looked up
Most reverently into my face, as though
I were a man of marvels, such as he
Had seen last Michaelmas at our great fair.
A gentle juggler, I conveyed the child
From the low sheltered walk wherein we were
Unto a bare and lofty terrace, whence
We looked into the desolate recess
Of a huge mountain clothed in shining snow.
The air was warm and tranquil ; not a breath
Stirred in the seven tall larches, a sweet ring
Which visibly was making all the haste
It could, to robe itself in blythesome green.
The boughs were pendulous and still ; and there
I placed the boy in front of the vast cove
And giant ribs of snow, and bade him look
Boldly into the mountain's snowy face,
And ask it for a wind, a good cold wind
To blow into his eyes. With timid voice,—
As of a child, half pleased and half afraid,
Who yields himself upon a Christmas night
To some new trick, when all the rest stand back,—

He asked the snowy mountain for a wind.
Scarce had the words escaped his trembling lips,
When, with a motion on the distant woods,
A cold fresh breeze along the terrace swept,
And died away, a marvellous response
To his shy prayer. How quick his heart did beat,
While with surprise and awe he looked again
Less boldly in the mountain's snowy face !
This time he did not ask it for a wind.

'Twas a sweet sight to see the little boy
Stand there, and gaze into the mountain's face
And on the sheets of silent, sparkling snow,
With eyes brimful of wonder and delight,
And with bewildered meanings running over.

Now when his patience—'twas a scanty stock—
Had wellnigh failed, there came another breeze,
Colder and ruder than the first, at which
He laughed outright into the mountain's face
With pure delight, as though it sent the breeze
For his sole sport ; and I might safely say
The snowy mountain laughed at him again ;
For it sent out a mighty, boisterous wind

Which made the larch-trees loudly creak, and blew
Young Richard's tartan bonnet down the hill.

Away in mad pursuit, both man and boy
Followed the truant cap, which we reclaimed
With laughter ere it reached the dangerous stream.

“Thou wilt remember now,” said I, “the power
“Of the old earth, and that she hath a heart,
“A mother's heart, among her lonely hills.
“Thou wilt remember too and love this snow,
“Whose beautiful white fields are melting fast;
“And this kind-hearted mountain thou wilt love.
“Be kind to it thyself in all thy thoughts;
“And when the evil summer of these vales
“Arrives, and that high summit brings the clouds
“To weep a very plague of drizzling rain
“All through the holydays, remember still
“This mountain is the mother of cold winds;
“And be not petulant, but love it well
“For this day's boon:” then with a mimic sign
Of wrath, I added, “and forget not too
“That poets are lone walkers and strange men,
“Not to be leaped on in their chosen paths,

“Or scared by shouts from groves of arbutus.”

Once more in my peculiar, sheltered walk,
My thoughts imbrued in blood and battlefields,
And with my fancy chastened and kept down
By the great shade of royal Charlemagne,
I see the boy at play upon the lawn,
But with the great, white mountain in his heart,
Which loads him with a new solemnity,—
An altered being, even in his play,
More happy, yet less vocal in his mirth.
From this day forth the mountain and the snow
From common sights are lifted in his mind
Unto the rank of causes, solemn things
To be by him more honored than before.

It is a just beginning : all our lives
This is the wisdom which we have to learn—
To see our earthly shadows taken up
And by the Cross commuted into signs
Or substances,—and with strong faith to feel
Our own immortal being so transfused
Into the out-lying world, that common forms
Are canonized, and circled with a light,

Like the pale rings around the autumnal moon.
The man to whom our common daily things
By meek devotion and a simple eye
Have grown to reverend solemnities,—
What lacketh he of his full growth in Christ ?

XXVIII.

To little Alice.

I.

If thou couldst be a bird, what bird wouldst
thou be?

A frolicsome gull on the billowy sea,
Screaming and wailing when stormy winds rave,
Or anchored, white thing! on the merry green
wave?

II.

Or an eagle aloft in the blue ether dwelling,
Free of the coves of the hoary Helvellyn,
Who is up in the sunshine when we are in shower,
And could reach our loved ocean in less than
an hour?

III.

Or a heron that haunts the Wallachian edge
Of the barbarous Danube mid forests of sedge,
And hears the rude waters through dreary swamps
 flowing,
And the cry of the wild swans, and buffalos
 lowing ?

IV.

Or a stork on a mosque's broken pillar in peace
By some famous old stream in the bright land of
 Greece,
A sweet-mannered housholder ! waiving his state
Now and then in some kind little toil for his
 mate ?

V.

Or a murmuring dove at Stamboul, buried deep
In the long cypress woods where the infidels sleep,
Whose leaf-muffled voice is the soul of the seas
That hath passed from the Bosphorus into the
 trees ?

VI.

Or a heath-bird that lies on the Cheviot moor,
Where the wet shining earth is as bare as a
 floor,
Who mutters glad sounds though his joys are
 but few,—
Yellow moon, windy sunshine, and skies of cold
 blue?

VII.

Or if thy man's heart worketh in thee at all,
Perchance thou would'st dwell by some bold
 baron's hall,
A black glossy rook working early and late,
Like a laboring man, on the baron's estate?

VIII.

Or a linnet who builds in the close hawthorn
 bough,
Where her small frightened eyes may be seen
 looking through;

Who heeds not, fond mother! the oxlips that
shine

On the hedge-bank beneath, or the glazed
celandine?

IX.

Or a swallow that fieth the sunny world over
The true home of spring and spring-flowers to
discover;

Who, go where he will, takes away on his wings
Good words from mankind for the bright thoughts
he brings?

X.

But what! can these pictures of strange wingèd
mirth

Make the child to forget that she walks on the
earth?

Dost thou feel at thy sides as though wings were
to start

From some place where they lie folded up in thy
heart?

XI.

Then love the green things in thy first simple
youth,

And the beasts, birds, and fishes with heart and in
truth,

And fancy shall pay thee thy love back in skill ;—
Thou shalt be all the birds of the air at thy will !

XXIX.

The Ascent of Helbellyn.

APRIL 28, 1842. HAVING ASCENDED PARNASSUS THE SAME
DAY IN THE PRECEDING YEAR.

I.

At morn we wended forth right merrily,
With hearts as high as though we had been bent
On great emprise and martial tournament :
The wind blew softly through the azure sky,
And in the dome the mountains stood upright,
Vested from head to foot in softest light,
Hung round them, a transparent drapery.

II.

The budding branches of the oakwood bowers
With honeysuckle in full leaf were tangled ;
The western slopes with primroses were spangled,
And cuckoo-plant and dusky violet-flowers,
And here and there the fragrant woodland floor
With white anemonies was powdered o'er,
Like the last melting fringes of snow-showers.

III.

How rich the carpet of yon fir-tree dome !
The moss just tinged afresh in juicy dyes,
The moneywort with countless golden eyes,
The dark green daffodil now shorn of bloom,
The woodroffe with its fragrant withered leaves,
While here and there an early orchis grieves
To flower and fade before its kinsfolk come.

IV.

And to the eye betrayed by his deep tongue,
Within his watch-tower of old fir there sate
The pensive heron in baronial state,
And thrushes from their holly coverts sung ;
All things were happy,—from the radiant skies
Down to the little breeze-fanned butterflies
Which pendent from the rocking may flowers swung.

V.

Along the moorland steeps the heated air
To lines of silky softness did subdue
The harsh, rough walls, and bade the purple hue
Of the bright mere a crape of mist to wear.

The young lambs gleamed upon the island mead ;
 And hyacinths had just begun to lead
 Their blue processions o'er the coppice there.

VI.

Then past the lately-felled larch wood we rode,
 Not thankless for the odor which it gave ;
 We saw the newly plumed birch branches wave
 Where Greenhead brook in its rough channel
 flowed ;
 Onward we mounted from the quiet vale
 Till through its verdant gap the smooth Dunmail
 One distant head of father Skiddaw showed.

VII.

The mountain pass with streaks of herbage green
 And loose blue stones alternately was faced,
 Like amethyst with emerald interlaced
 On either side, and the blue sky between.
 The haze-fire played on Dunmail's shapeless tomb,
 As though 'twere breathed from out the uncouth
 gloom
 Where that old king nine hundred years hath been.

VIII.

O I am garrulous perforce to tell
 The birds, the wildflowers, and the pageantries
 Of light and shade, the foliage and the breeze,
 Which there upon that joyous day befell;
 Lest, aught omitting, I should haply miss
 Some cheerful adjunct to that mood of bliss
 Whereon hereafter we should love to dwell.

IX.

Then from the Raise we turned to look once more
 On Grasmere vale, so sweetly interspersed
 With fields and woodlands, and the blue lake
 nursed
 By its two streams, and fair hills bending o'er;
 Ruling the vale, was heard the cuckoo's cry
 Ubiquitous, like laws' dread majesty,
 Unseen, but audible from shore to shore.

X.

The poets vaunt autumnal hues too much;
 There is a season, a brief twenty days,
 Intercalated between summer's rays

And the green flush of spring, whose tints are such
 As for their depth and rich variety
 Autumnal coloring do all outvie
 In shading delicate and grace of touch.

XI.

The gilded oak, the willow's pale sea-green,
 The sable pine with brilliant larches blending,
 And the fair birch its glossy plumage lending
 To mediate the light and dark between,—
 The yellow beech, the manly sycamore,
 And clouds of cherry blossom floating o'er—
 May well outdo sad autumn's brodered scene.

XII.

And all is joy or hope in earth and sky;
 'Tis not like autumn's pensive power that lies
 In beautiful decay, which we so prize
 Because it is a glory passing by;—
 But a sweet sense that flowers are underfoot,
 And that long evenings now are taking root,
 And summer days foreshadowed pleasantly.

XIII.

But now, the Cumbrian border gained at last,
At Wythburn's larch-girt Shrine and lonely dwell-
ing

We stood beneath the steep of great Helvellyn.
One year this very morning we had passed
The defiles of Parnassus, and had seen
The crags which over voiceless Delphi lean,
And on rich Crissa's plain their shadow cast.

XIV.

And the same day had now been dignified,
In humorous caprice and pleasant mood,
To explore Helvellyn's pastoral solitude,
And the huge coves upon its eastern side :
And never day could dawn more graciously ;
There was no cloud in all the dappled sky
Which did not clear of every summit ride.

XV.

Like virtue, old Helvellyn must be won
By the first hard ascent o'er moorland grass
Intolerably smooth, as polished glass,

Save the moss-swollen lines where streamlets run
 Tinkling like hidden bells ; and o'er the steep
 The shrunken waterfalls in silence creep,
 Braiding their crystal beadshowers in the sun.

XVI.

And, as we clung like goats to the steep grass,
 How strangely sight and memory did strike
 Against each other ! oh how all unlike
 To the Greek hill our own Helvellyn was !
 And, ere we did the first green platform reach,
 In broken words each had reminded each
 Of noble features in the Phocian Pass.

XVII.

Oh I could weep for pity when I hear,
 Soft as far echoes, these old names of Greece,
 Spots I have seen in utter joyless peace,
 Like sanctuaries, beautiful but drear !
 And who will blame though Delphi now supplants
 With vivid presence these domestic haunts,
 As though embayed in its rough ledges here ?

XVIII.

Full in the face of sunset Ktypa stood,
 When from the sheepflocks on the Theban plain
 I first beheld the great Parnassian chain,
 Nine layers of folded mountain crag, which glowed
 Distinctly pencilled out by purple mist,
 Till, by the shooting flames of sunset kissed,
 They melted off into the golden flood.

XIX.

Calm was the morning when our upward way
 From bowl to bowl of shrubby moorland rose,
 Where nothing but smooth-stemmed lentiscus
 grows :

The distances were soft and clear ; no ray
 Of garish sunbeam to those heights did come,
 Curtained within a pleasant, pensive gloom
 Of daylight tinged, but not obscured, with grey.

XX.

Fearful, Parnassus ! are thy clefts, which lean
 With their deep yellow rocks across the dell,
 Terrace on terrace piled, and citadel

With ever-tumbling towers, o'ertopped with green,
 With belts of jutting pine-wood¹ darkly seamed
 In airy, hanging slopes, as I have dreamed
 The Babylonian gardens to have been.

XXI.

There is Arracova with sounding shores,
 Perched mid the torrent-springs and eagles'-
 nests :

There, on her steep recumbent, Delphi rests
 Her patient ear on old earth's steaming pores ;
 There in a cool rock-shaded trough, hard by
 The silent tripod, gifted Castaly
 Her silver water frugally outpours.

XXII.

How beautiful the moon rose on the shore
 And olive-tops of Salona ! The light
 In trickling falls stole down from every height,
 Until the pinewood belts were silvered o'er ;

¹ *Pinus maritima*.

And tremulous pulses of white splendor crept
To glens which still in purple darkness slept,
Teasing the eye their soft gloom to explore.

XXIII.

I rose and sunk upon the gentle sea,
And from Herodotus I strove to spell
By the clear moon some Delphic oracle
In quaint hexameters, while memory
Aided the dubious light: I was alone,
And all entranced, for truth, which had outgrown
My dream, still more a dream appeared to be.

XXIV.

How glorious was the night, the twofold power
Of hills and starry sea, when I did float
At anchor there, while dark above my boat
In the bright air did true Parnassus tower!
And, as the curlew's solitary wail
Was faintly answered from some inland vale,
I could have wept for joy of that sweet hour.

XXV.

As in the night all outward noises creep
Into our dreams, so the sad curlew's cry
On the Greek bay Helvellyn did supply
Unto my wakeful trance ; a lonely sheep
Sent forth a mournful bleating to recall
Me from the dream which did in gentle thrall
The very outposts of my senses keep.

XXVI.

To hear high up it is a solemn sound,
And, rising from a sunken hollow nigh,
It seems far off, a voice in the blue sky
Or earthborn plaint breathed from the moorland
ground,
A woful elegy, which hourly fills
The pastoral waste with melancholy thrills,
And echoes by the lone tarn's desert bound.

XXVII.

The platform gained, we watched one fair cloud sail
For some Atlantic haven ; the gay fir
Looked through the mist below like gossamer,

A thin green network stretched across the vale.
The wheat-ears ran or glided through the
grass
And o'er the stones; they might for serpents
pass,
Parting the crisp white stalks with rustling tail.

XXVIII.

One more ascent, and we had gained with slow
And weary step the mountain's eastern edge,
Where hanging o'er the sheer and dizzy ledge
There stood a sparkling parapet of snow,
Breeding a wild desire to lean thereon,
Although we shivered at the thought alone,
And turned from that abyss which yawned below.

XXIX.

Then in light mood the surface did we break,
The virgin surface of the giant drift,
And to our mouths the tempting crystals lift,

Yet dared we not our burning thirst to slake ;
 But, standing on the slope of greensward nigh
 With the white battlement in front breast-
 high,
 We delved our hands therein for coolness' sake.

xxx.

Then onward o'er a shingly, sea-like beach
 Of dreary stones with scarce a lichen veined,
 Or blotched with golden spots, or weather-
 stained,
 Did we the high-crowned promontory reach,
 And hoary pile and beacon-staff all rent
 And peeled and white, which wintry storms have
 sent
 Wild winds and eddies of strong rain to bleach.

xxxi.

There to the north the silver Solway shone,
 And Criffel, by the hazy atmosphere
 Lifted from off the earth, did then appear

A nodding island or a cloud-built throne.
 And there, a spot half fancied and half seen,
 Was sunny Carlisle ; and by hillside green
 Lay Penrith with its beacon of red stone.

XXXII.

Southward through pale blue steam the eye might
 glance
 Along the Yorkshire fells, and o'er the rest,
 My native hill, dear Ingleboro's crest
 Rose shapely, like a cap of maintenance.
 The classic Duddon, Leven and clear Kent
 A trident of fair estuaries sent,
 Which did among the mountain roots advance.

XXXIII.

Westward, a region of tumultuous hills,
 With here and there a tongue of azure lake
 And ridge of fir, upon the eye did break.

But chiefest wonder are the tarns and rills
 And giant coves, where great Helvellyn broods
 Upon his own majestic solitudes,
 Which even now the sunlight barely fills.

XXXIV.

There Striding Edge with Swirrel meets to
 keep
 The Red Tarn still when tempests rage above ;
 There Catsty-Cam doth watch o'er Keppel Cove
 And the chill pool that lurks beneath the steep.
 Far to the right St. Sunday's quiet shade
 Stoops o'er the dell where Grisedale Tarn is
 laid
 Beneath that solemn crag in waveless sleep.

XXXV.

The golden cliffs which from Parnassus lean
 With uncouth rivets of the roots of trees,
 And silent-waving pinewood terraces,

And burnished zones of hanging evergreen,—
Haunts of the antique muses though they are,
May not for dread solemnity compare
Or savage wonders with this native scene.

XXXVI.

Awful in moonlight shades, more awful far
When the winds wake, are those majestic coves,
Or when the thunder feeds his muttering
 droves
Of swart clouds on the raven-haunted scar ;
And in the bright tranquillity of noon
Most awful ; lovely only in the boon
Of soft apparel wrought by twilight air.

XXXVII.

Shall Brownrigg Well be left without a song,
Which, near the summit, mid the wintry snows
In a clear vein of liquid crystal flows,

And through the pastoral months in gushes strong
 Gleams in the eye of sunset, and from far
 Holds up a mirror to the evening star,
 While round its mouth the thirsty sheepflocks
 throng?

XXXVIII.

And now, with loitering step and minds unbent
 Through hope fulfilled, we reached the vale once
 more;
 And, wending slowly along Rydal shore,
 Watched the dusk splendor which from Langdale
 went,
 And on the hills dethroned the afternoon;
 And home was gained ere yet the yellow moon
 From over Wansfell her first greeting sent.

XXXIX.

Thus flowed the day, a current o'er the mind;
 Yet happiness, however plain or short,
 Is alway meekly forward to consort

With virtuous mood and purpose, and unbind
Selfish desires, making the genial calms
Of pleasure not abused a liberal alms
Of loving thoughts unto all human-kind.

XXX.

Spring and Love.

I.

Now am I an envious man,
In whose veins there never ran
Envy's fire till now ;
For I everywhere must see
Birds that newly mated be,
Sitting on the bough.

II.

All things in the earth and air
At their will consorted are,
But alas ! I only
Am disconsolately stirred,
Coveting to be a bird,
To be no more lonely.

III.

Ah! the stockdove when he woos
Little knows how he pursues
Me with melancholy;
And without a hopeful flame
I a lovelorn spirit am,
By love wasted wholly.

IV.

Thus I skim upon the wind,
Seeking mates I cannot find,
Like the first-come swallow;
Or a breeze that silently
Dies of loneliness at sea
With no ship to follow.

V.

Thus I made my plaint one day
In the birds' nest month of May;
And Spring said mockingly,—
Woful caitiff! why so sad
When the earth is all so glad
For the love of me?

VI.

Why the pied and pretty flowers
Pluckest thou in all my bowers
With such wanton waste ?
Why from all the splendors seen
In this beechgrove, golden-green,
Goest thou so fast ?

VII.

Though the songsters, two and two,
Seek the vales and woodlands through
Hidden nests to build,
Yet the blossoms grow alone,
Springing sweetly one by one
In the meadow-field.

VIII.

Nay, said I, the very flowers
Have a suitor at all hours
In the amorous breeze,
And they grow in little beds,
Leaning on each other's heads
In bright companies.

IX.

Well then, said the merry Season,
If thou wilt not follow reason,
Take thyself to rhyme ;
I will marry thought to thought,
Till they shall be all enwrought
By skill of my sweet time.

X.

On their fingers shall be bound
Rings of metre, links of sound,
And fancy's orange-flowers ;
Thou shalt be this jocund May
Full of these betrothals gay
In thy secret bowers.

XI.

Love the compact heard, and smiled,
Like a mischief-making child,
And dogged me on my way ;
When I wandered far or near,
Still he whispered in my ear,—
Thou art losing May !

XII.

When I was mid flowers and trees,
Then the fanning of the breeze
Shewed me birds' nests there ;
For it put the leaves aside,
And all round me I espied
Birds' nests everywhere.

XIII.

Still I wrote and wrote away,
Making verses all the day,
Striving not to hear
What love daily, hourly spake,
In sweeter verse than I could make,
In my secret ear.

XIV.

Then I listened for awhile,
And I saw the urchin smile,
Knowing I was won ;—
“ Take heed thou art not belated,
“ If thou art not quickly mated
“ 'Ere youth's May is done.”

XV.

So the pleasant warning rung,
So all May the urchin sung
Without change or stop ;
And the sound was never weary,
Though it was full often dreary
For the lack of hope.

XVI.

O Rhyme ! O Reason ! when ye prove
Untrue lieges to great Love,
How are ye out-worn,
With your offices and natures,
And the sweetness of your features
Utterly forsworn !

XXXI.

The Poet's Workshop.

I.

THE litter of a student's room
Bewilders those who do not know it;
But it is neatness when compared
With the dim workshop of a poet.

II.

O if you could but enter there,
Where foreign foot may not intrude,
Of puzzling sights and puzzling sounds
'Twould seem a clamorous solitude.

III.

The murmuring hum of line, half line,
Choice turn of words and happy ending,
As from a thousand spinning wheels
Is there continually ascending.

IV.

There sight and sound fresh forms and tools
At windows ever open fling,
Which that strange Man, the Artisan,
Receives with boorish welcoming.

V.

And heaps of words and heaps of thoughts,
In rows or circles gathered, wait,
And seem but sorry furniture
Unto the uninitiate.

VI.

The words in little parcels are,
By nature prone to nuptial ties,
With some apart, like bachelors
At hand to fill chance vacancies.

VII.

And here and there are idioms cast
To which no filing polish gives,
And chief in our hoarse tongue we note
Battered and bruised infinitives.

VIII.

There are articulate-speaking thoughts,
Gregarious things, in lowing herds,
Quick guesses that were never seen
Without their flowing veil of words.

IX.

These are the things of longest life,
Struck off in some high hour of mirth :
We know not whether thoughts or words
Came first and foremost to the birth.

X.

And feelings inarticulate
Stir every heap of words asunder,
Shifting and shaking all the tools,
As though blind worms were crawling under.

XI.

Strange shop it is with littered floor !
Rejected types are strewn all o'er it,
Which one day tumble into rhyme,
As though they had been destined for it.

XII.

And pliant supple shapes there are,
Which neath the artist's pressure bend,
Beginning as he wills they should,
But coming to a different end.

XIII.

Look from the window ! Canst thou tell
The land, the latitude, the weather,
With sun and moon, and night and noon,
So oddly kneaded all together ?

XIV.

And dost thou ask if habit holds
This shop within her sphere and order ?
I say, 'tis built on her domains;
But at the very outmost border.

XV.

From wild turmoil and caitiff toil
Seek not, Philanthropist ! to win it ;
For that strange Man, the Artisan,
Is happy, oh how happy ! in it.

XXXII.

I have Wild Moods, &c.

I HAVE wild moods (who hath not ?) when I long
For midnight tempests, and the boisterous song
And jocund rudeness of the mighty wind ;
And when I have a weight upon my mind
To be dispersed by warring element,—
A warp within my soul, to be unbent
At once by the tremendous sympathy
Of rocking woods, rent earth and reeling sea,—
Moods when the Whence and What and Whither
flash

Like a bright arrow o'er my soul, and dash
All meek, good things from their calm pedestals,
Lighting within my spirits' ample halls
An impure conflagration, which destroys
In one dread hour the store of peaceful joys

Won from religious ties or hallowed fears,
Or fruit mayhap of consecrated tears,
Tears shed o'er sin, or smiles by Angels brought
In holy churches from a ritual caught :—
Moods are they when I bid my soul come bare
From her dim place, that I may gaze at her
And praise or blame her make ; there is in me
At times a hot and fierce desire to see
And realize my immortality :—
When it would be relief to me to heave
A huge unnatural weight of rock, and leave
The mass on some hill-top, for aye to prove
That there is nought man's spirit may not move :—
When I should love to scatter a thick night
Over all lands and oceans, so to blight
The joys of earth, and see all men afraid,
While my one gazing soul stood undismayed.—

These are the spirit-wasting moods, yea, these
The fever, restlessness, and weak disease
Of one who prays too seldom : at dead night
Doth the foul spirit come with unstayed might,
Until our open souls grow large and swell
With the influx of dark, invisible

And dire possession, that doth quickly drench
Our powers in sin, and fain our souls would wrench
From the good Cross, which, like a floating mast
Unto the shipwrecked, is our first and last
True hope :—and our hands bleed in holding fast.

XXXIII.

An Epistle to a young M. P.

“WHY anchorest thou in those blue lakes for ever,
Dear Student of the moorland and the river ?”—

My old Companion ! we have been apart
And have lost count of one another's heart.
A various Past, an unknown region lies
Between the sweet tract of our memories
And the too-stirring Present. I have been
A wanderer through many a foreign scene,
Not without inward change ; and I have dwelt
Much in my lonely spirit, till I felt
I was a person to myself unknown ;
And this hath been one fruit of being alone.
And I have changed each image of my life ;
And all the objects of my mortal strife

I have arrayed in other shapes and places,
Encompassing myself with different faces,
To see in what relationship I stood
To the new world around me : both my good
And ill have been most intricately shifted,
And my whole life insensibly uplifted
Unto a different end : my fear and hope
Have other holdfasts and another scope ;
And love is unto me a different birth
From what it was in our old boyish mirth,
And hath a deeper root in this kind earth.
I have a more abounding joy, a will
Less mutable, and faculties more still.
There were green withs about my spirit bound,
But they are lying faded on the ground.
Now I can walk abroad in the sweet calm
Of resignation, breathing holy balm
Like evening air around me : I am haunted
By a new boldness, solemn and undaunted,
The very treasure I have always wanted ;
And, with whatever friends or strangers thrown,
The secret of that boldness is my own,

An underground delight, a murmuring
Among dry leaves and grass, as from a spring.
The thing for which I pined, the early lost,
The vainly sought on boyhood's sunny coast,
The thing that left me, like an uncaged dove,
I have laid hands on : and it is not love.

I mourn not, as thou mournest, o'er the fate
Of our own summer year of Thirty Eight.
It came and went within us, like a breeze,
Chiming among our thoughts as in the trees.
It stirred us, as a breeze may stir the lake,
And thou art gazing yet on its bright wake.
A glory is no glory, if it last ;
Thou art entranced, young dreamer ! in the past.
None dream so wildly or so much, as those
Whose early manhood rank or duty throws
Into the fret of action, action spoken,
Where energy is prematurely broken
Into such fragments and small sums of power
As may be drawn for by the present hour.
These are the dreamers, whom the little things
Of this life deafen with their murmurings,

✓ Who are constrained to let the Present cast
A shadow o'er the Future and the Past,
Or let the Present's feverish pressure dry
Those two great fountains of nobility.

There is a time in life when it is well
That our true selves should be invisible,
When we should stand in patient calm apart,
And action should lie still within our heart,
Like unripe ore, collecting every hour
From self-restraint new increments of power.
There is a time in life when we should shroud
Our inner selves with somewhat of a cloud,
When to bystanders we should strive to seem
Less than we are. and to appear to dream
When we are toiling earnestly and much :
For so may we ward off all outward touch
And meddling hindrance, which might mar and
 spoil
The growing fabric of our hidden toil.
And therefore am I anchored in blue lakes,
And screened, like some shy bird, by copsewood
 brakes,

Lest things drift uppermost and be revealed,
Which I would have in my dim self concealed.

For I have had, like many another man,
A life with two beginnings; and I ran
Unto an end in my first forward youth,
Which had the vesture and the face of truth;
But it was not the measure of my being,
And therefore am I with wise caution fleeing
To lurk awhile and tarry for more age
In an obscure and quiet anchorage.

In that old rambling year of Thirty Eight
Thou knewest me encircled with a state
And retinue of vision, feeling, thought,
Joy, fear, and hot conception, all inwrought.
That pageant is worn out: from that old ring
I have stepped forth, and am encompassing
Myself afresh, and with long-pondered moves
Am bringing up new joys, new fears, new loves.
Thou askest how and where hath come the change?
In what new fields my thought and fancy range?
I can but tell thee of some outward shapes;
Thou canst but hear the murmur which escapes

Amid the silence : it will show where lies
The growing quarrel in our sympathies.

Ah for the faded year of Thirty Eight !
How little recked I then of this strange fate
Which lay in ambush at the very door
Of my hot youth, the spoiler of its store,
Like a new wisdom in a heart grown old,
A mountain stone amid the shy flock rolled.—
Enough ; and dost thou ask where now I range,
Through what transfiguring of inward change ?

To thee that Thirty Eight still sparkles near,
While to thy friend it is a faded year—
Faded in all save truest love for thee,
And that high-souled young priest beyond the sea,
And that dear bard, whose life is like a river,
Singing and sighing on its road for ever.
Time was when from within myself I drew
My powers and thoughts and instincts : all I knew
Was but the self-sprung harvest of my heart,
And the whole outward world was cast apart ;
I was a worldless man, a thing detached,
A wandering cloud, a being all unmatched

With outward destiny ; but now my power
Is from the world imported every hour.
The pains I suffer, and the tears I see,
Men's passions chance-encountered, and child's
 glee,

And moral contradictions, and green leaves,
And skies, and streams,—from these my spirit
 weaves

Her web, and every day that passes by
Doth add some little to the tapestry :
For moral wisdom is a growing thing,
Whene'er it rises from an outward spring.

Time was when with a young man's pride I
 dreamed

Quaintness was power ; and when to differ seemed
Greater than to agree, and I esteemed
All individual marks, which stand apart,
Above the beatings of my common heart,
The heart I share with others : now I cherish
All commonplace designs as things which nourish.
A fellow-feeling with my kindred ; now
To rise and sink, to range from high to low,

To think as all men think in woe or mirth,
Seems unto me the greatest gift on earth.
Thus self hath daily less significance ;
And, like one waking from a pleasant trance,
I love the pensive glow of earth far more
Than the bright lights upon that dream-land shore.
Our boyhood was a noble savage state,
Whence we were not reclaimed in Thirty Eight.
But now the heart's meek household growths are
ours,
And we must shade ourselves in their green
bowers,
With holiest care the shoots to prune or train,
With smiles for sunshine, blameless tears for rain.
I am not idle, though at anchor staying
To learn self-mastery, a wise delaying.
Had it been good, or had a heart of truth,
I would sue back to me my banished youth.
In calmly bending waters now I ride
With manhood flowing round me like a tide :
And, whether winds be foul or fair skies blue,
I shall heave anchor when the ship is due,

And come within thy sight to seek a part
In the world's fretful glory, where thou art—
A man in place with boyhood at thy heart.
To thee, still in the lap of our old dream,
This uncouth teaching for awhile must seem
A cold philosophy, a barren song ;
But it will not seem so unto thee long.
Thou too wilt one day learn—it is not cold
To speak of boyhood as a thing grown old.

XXXIV.

The Future.

TO MY BROTHER EDWARD.

I.

I HAVE wishes, I have dreams,
And some vagrant hope which seems
Like a most uncertain star,
Still a joy, a joy from far :
Yet the Future is to me
Bright and barren as the sea,
Bare of sorrow, bare of glee :
When the present hour is weary
Old times are my sanctuary.

II.

In my heart are many springs,
All with cheerful murmurings ;
But their sweetness lures my mind
Oft its armor to unbind :

Then the Past my succor is,
A restraint on present bliss,
And an impulse when remiss,
A calm precinct, a grave rule,
Where I am all day at school.

III.

I have such a power of love,
And such crowds of objects move
My affections every day,
That the Present glides away :
And I have too quick an eye
Heavenly gestures to descry,
Till in mute repose they lie
With time's shadow on them cast
In the bosom of the Past.

IV.

There must surely be a cause
Why, reversing common laws,
Heaven by no foreboding sorrow
Drives my thoughts upon the morrow,

And that simple childish hours
Should be still the only bowers
Where repentance gathers flowers,
Whose strong scent of purer years
Kindles awe and wakens tears.

v.

I have striven in restless hours
To invade the Future's bowers,
And with fancy's help to riot
In the exquisite unquiet
Of a self-disturbance, where
All is shadowy as air ;
But it left my spirit bare,
And a sin was sure to come
To my wild heart as a home.

vi.

Farewell, Future ! thou must be
Still a pathless tract to me,
A bar which I may overleap
Only in the spells of sleep.

Heaven be praised ! thou canst not tease
Me from my contented ease,
Nor taint me with the weak disease
Of neglecting in my youth
Simple thought and lowly truth.

VII.

I shall reach thee at the last
When commuted to the Past,
And my pleasure will be double
For the self-restraint and trouble
Of averting thus my eyes
From thy pomps and mysteries,
While I watch the Present rise
From one conquest to another,
Virtue still being virtue's brother.

VIII.

Yet I doubt not thou art giving
Light in which I now am living ;
As the moon, although unseen,
Somehow scatters stealthy sheen.

In the Past I often see
Things which cannot rightly be
The Past's, but must belong to thee,
Wandering Future ! strangely cast
Deep into the prescient Past.

XXXV.

To J. M.

I.

WHAT seeest thou
Of bush and bough,
Green field or moorland border,
Encompassed round,
By sight and sound,
The order of disorder?

II.

With what fit state
Can poor Spring wait
On thee in London living?
What moral light
Are mornings bright
To thy tired conscience giving?

III.

What impulses
Of skies and trees
Can lonely fancy merit,
Unless perchance
Past springs may dance
Along thy thrilling spirit ?

IV.

May every hour
An April shower
Thy thirsty heart be haunting,
Thus filling up
From its cold cup
The joys which thou art wanting !

V.

I would not be
This day with thee,
For all I love thee dearly ;
I would not miss
This vernal bliss
Which hath begun so early.

VI.

Yet in my joy
Is this alloy,
It is almost a sorrow,
No budding brake
Thy soul can make
Impatient for the morrow.

VII.

Through good and ill
With earnest will
Thou toil'st for peer and peasant,
And yet I would
One little bud
Might wean thee from the present,—

VIII.

That thou couldst run
In morning sun
To see the rose-leaves peeping ;
For they would tell
How calm and well
Earth works while men are sleeping.

IX.

For busy walk
And toil and talk
Are not life's only measure ;
But man, like earth,
Hath quiet mirth,
Which is a better treasure.

X.

I am cast down
Lest that huge town,
Wild streets and wilder faces,
With clamorous state
Obliterate
The thought of vernal places.

XI.

For safety's sake
To keep awake
The spirit of the season,
Say once an hour—
' A lowly Flower
Is wiser than proud Reason.'

XII.

With all the stir,
Dear Prisoner !
Of wealth and rank about thee,
'Twill make thee smile
To think awhile
Of the green world without thee.

XXXVI.

Ennerdale.

I THOUGHT of Ennerdale as of a thing
Upon the confines of my memory.
There was a hazy gleam as o'er a sheet
Of sunny water cast, and mountain side,
And much ploughed land, and cleanly cottages,
A bubbling brook, the emptying of the lake,
An indistinct remembrance of being pleased
That there were hedgerows there instead of walls,
That it was noon, and that I swam for long
In the warm lake, and dressed upon a rock :—
And this is all of verdant Ennerdale
Which I can now recover from my mind ;
The current of bright years hath washed it out.
Yet do I find the memory of it still
A thing which I can lean upon, a spot
Of greenness and fresh water in my soul.

And I do feel the very knowledge good
That there is such a place as Ennerdale,
A valley and a lake of such a kind,
As though I did possess it all myself
With daily eye and ear, because I know
It *is* possessed by simple dalesmen there.

And I have many Ennerdales, am rich
In woods and fields the owners think are theirs.
I can dispark the trim enclosures first,
And, in the very wantonness of power,
Forthwith enclose the black, unfettered heath.
I pass along the road, and set my seal
On lawns, rough banks, wet coverts of wild flowers,
And I can pick out trees from forest lands,
For beauty or uncouthness singular,
As heriots ; nay, the very brooks salute
Their master as they leap, tinkling to him,
Shrewd vassals ! as their truest feudal lord,
With music such as they have never paid
Unto the self-called owner : when I walk
By night among the moistened woods they send
From every glen their dues of mossy smells,

And fragrance of the withered things which lie
Upon the woodland floor.

I make a stir
Among the fields and flowery clods, as though
I would have something changed ; I fold my arms,
And look around, and draw my breath ; I gaze
Upon the fair estates and think how I
Shall will them to my children in sweet songs.
Early and late I'm out upon my lands,
And with pleased consequence survey the growth
Of my young trees, acquiring fresh each day,
Although the owners know not that they are
But tenants at my will. I have, in store,
The title-deeds of many a distant wood
And foreign chase. With feeling eye and ear
I have been gifted, and in right of them,
Like a great lord, I walk about the land,
Claiming and dispossessing at my will,—
The belted Earl of many Ennerdales !

XXXVII.

A Letter to a Friend.

THOU askest me, dear Friend ! for what old cause
These men thus hate thee.—Hatred hath no laws,
But is a weak-willed thing, which in young days
A look, a word, a random doubt can raise.
Account not of it ; it hath slender root ;
For bitter speech doth mostly overshoot
In our warm youth a passion's real length,
And words are unfair measures of the strength
Of youthful things : there is too great a want
Of love and kindly thoughts, for hate to haunt
A young heart long. Account not of it then,
Nor harshly blame the speeches of those men.
Ah ! never blame the hearts thou dost not know :
Full are they doubtless of good thoughts, and flow
O'er many round them with a power to bless,
With sunny tempers, and meek gentleness,

With quick forgiveness, and sweet conquests won
O'er self and sin, and generous actions done.
They have their ring of friends, and pensive ties,
And put as much on welcomes and kind eyes
As we can do. Why wilt thou treasure up
Hard words like these, which do but taint the cup
Of thine own happiness? Thou canst not spare
One shred of peaceful feeling; life will mar
That store too soon with its rude misery.
I should have thought, dear Friend! that I loved
thee

But feebly and unwisely to suppose
Thou shouldst permit thy spirit's deep repose
To be thus jarred, because some men speak ill
Of one with a proud heart and headstrong will,
Most variable mien, and bitter tongue
Which hath too often to like taunts been strung.

If I must blame, then will I censure thee;
For doubtless in the days when thou wert free
From those restraints upon thy thought and speech
Which now, by prayer with prayer enchained, can
reach

Barely across the day, thou mayst have wrought
Some evil, vented some ill-natured thought,
Been cold when kindly manners were required,
Distracted in thyself, sullen, or tired,
Imperious or capricious, at the hour
When, which is Angels' lot, thou hadst the power
To sow a gentle thought, or do a deed
Which, like a prayer, in thy behalf might plead.

Some wrong hast thou done them or their near
friends,

Whose memory, like a teasing shade, attends
The thought of thee within them. Ah ! be slow
To blame these censurers ! How canst thou
know

True love is not the soil where this dislike,
On jealous friendship grafted, now doth strike
Quick root, I hope not lasting ? Sure I am
It is more likely far that honest blame
Should rest on thee than that a groundless hate
On any human heart on earth should wait.
Oh ! surely there are none would rather slake
Their thirsty souls at bitter wells, than take

The sweet and ready waters of mild springs,
Which lure us by their very murmurings.
I must believe—fond faith perchance—true hate
To be of young hearts excommunicate.

“ But if the judgments are untrue?” What then?
They may not seem so unto other men
Who know thee better : and *I* never heard
Reported slander, but there was some word,
Some stray expression, like a well aimed dart,
Which found a rightful home within my heart.
If I deserved it not from him who spoke,
I did from some one else ; and it awoke
Soft thoughts and kind regrets, such as belong
In compensation unto those we wrong.
If now unmerited, it was not so
In younger days, or some few years ago ;
And it is well to have our sinful past
Upon our notice somewhat roughly cast
In bitter admonitions : Providence
By these revenges would prolong the sense
Of self-abasement, and the cleansing grief
Which in young hearts is wont to be too brief.

It is true health which Christian spirits win
From out the abiding shade of early sin.
But let this pass : an honest casuist
His holy science must have sorely missed,
Who would not from such things by subtle law
Wise canons for ascetic living draw ;
And even to ourselves it is more fair
To think ourselves in fault than that our neighbors
are.

Then be not thou afraid ; a few short years,
Deepening the shades of life with pensive fears,
Have holiest power to soften and subdue
The starting feature and immodest hue,
Which in our youth will struggle into view.
Time, which can heal us and yet give no pain,
Will right the tremulous balance once again,
And rescue, overlaid by youth's excess
Of speech and feeling, childhood's gentleness
Then mellowed by calm age. Oh ! it is sweet,
As through the thick of life we turn our feet
To feel how harsh, unamiable ways
Wear out within us by the lapse of days,

Or drop like chains which have our spirits bound
Close prisoners from the hearts which lie around.
Then meek-eyed simpleness and common mirth
Start, like the flowers in spring, o'er all the earth,
And we confess the world is made so fair
That nought, but self, can be beneath us there,
That such good clings to all that round us move
We fain must pity where we cannot love ;
There is no soil where scorn or cold dislike,
Except in self, abiding root can strike.

Then be not thou afraid : for I would see
In these dislikes a peaceful guarantee
Of gentleness hereafter, which may wait,
Kindly retributive, on this strange hate.
For, in the crossings of our various strife,
And oddly intersecting paths of life,
We may be brought in contact with a heart
Which dealt hard measure to us once, and part
Regretting that we should have been so much
Of our short lives beyond each other's touch,—
Winning kind thoughts which, whether told or not,
It is a solid blessing to have got.

And to the generous mind there is no love
Which doth more calm and ready service move
Than that which through harsh judgments hath
 been long

Withheld from those to whom we have done wrong.

To night in my lone ramble through the dell,
I saw the sun sink down behind the fell.
When twilight barred him out with crimson shrouds,
I saw a kneeling Angel in the clouds ;
It seemed the centre of the glory, whence—
A spot almost too bright for aching sense—
A deep effulgence travelled o'er the hills,
Lighting the woods, and finding out the rills
In their sequestered channels ; on the breast
Of one most rugged mountain did it rest.
Ah me ! dear Friend ! I wish thou couldst have
 seen

With what a light it flushed the vernal green,
And how the huge, unsightly stones it wrought
To forms of yielding softness, while it brought
A power of transmutation to the line
Which keen and jagged did but lately shine,

Yet now lay gloriously inflamed on high,
Like an aërial mist across the sky
Or wavering haze. Such is the softness cast
Upon the heart when youth's hot hour is past.
For some years now not one ungentle thought
Towards any of my kind hath in me wrought ;
Yet once more do I pray kind Heaven to give
That in this beam I may for ever live,
That I may have a sunset in my spirit
To glorify and soften all things near it !

XXXVIII.

The Easter Violets.

I.

I **SPOKE** by chance of modest flowers,
And how, in all the banks and bowers
Of vernal Bagley's greenwood ways,
They ever added to my store
Of festal joys, a charm the more
To Christian holydays.

II.

A kind heart, little known to me,
Amid the various company
That night this random mention heard.
I spoke with truth, but never thought
What welcome service would be wrought
For me by that stray word.

III.

Yet when we utter what we feel,
The homeliest, simplest things will steal
To many an ear and heart unknown ;
And most in song will quiet truth
In right of its unfading youth
Find out and win its own.

IV.

The sun shone fair on Easter Eve—
The day when festal fancies weave
Bright threads into the Lenten gloom :
When our free thoughts—Good Friday over—
Doubtful 'twixt joy and penance, hover
About the Garden Tomb.

V.

My new-made friend that very day,
His face with radiant humor gay
A little sheaf of violets brought,—
Large blossoms singled out with care,
And with long searching here and there
At that chill season got.

VI.

“ I’ve looked the college garden through
To find each one of freshest hue,
That from its purple censer flings
True fragrance to the cold March breeze ;—
You are a priest,” said he, “ take these
For Easter offerings.”

VII.

He tendered them with smiling glance
And playful grace, which did enhance
The courteous tribute that he brought.
It was a gentle act ; and stirred
My soul to think how simple word
In simple heart had wrought.

VIII.

A trivial act ! Yet kindness stored
In common vessels is a hoard,
Which we more palpably discover ;
We fancy there is better measure
Dealt out unto us when the treasure
From lesser gifts runs over.

IX.

The single drop of pearly dew
Which falls from out the harebell blue,
When on the breezy heath it quivers,
The meek observant heart will move
As proof, more touching, of God's love
Than the abounding rivers.

X.

O sweet is kindliness unbought
By service we ourselves have wrought,
Or long-tried friendship's winning arts !
O sweet is sympathy which springs
From chance occasions, random things,
And unexpected hearts !

XI.

There are who on vast purpose bent
With these stray joys are ill content,
These angel-scattered shreds of bliss,—
The wild-flowers of the lavish earth,
Her natural growth of blameless mirth ;—
Alas ! how much they miss !

XII.

The thoughts of kind acts long ago
Will one day, like a fountain, flow ;
And, when old age upon us sets,
We shall need memory then to cheer
A flagging mood or dry a tear
With such stray violets.

XIII.

They say that gentle soul is now
Beneath dire sorrow drooping low,
O'ershadowed by a clouded mind :
May Heaven to his meek heart restore
The radiant spirit as of yore,
And that rude spell unbind !

11/

XXXIX.

The Last Palatine.

THE FUNERAL OF WILLIAM VAN-MILDERT,
THE LAST PRINCE-BISHOP OF THE PALATINATE OF DURHAM,
FEBRUARY, 1836.

I.

How dark and dull is all the vaporous air,
Loaded with sadness as though earth would grieve
Whene'er the skirts of ancient grandeur leave
A place they once enriched forlorn and bare !
Man and the earth in mutual bonds have dwelt
So long together, that it were not strange
Old lights eclipsed and barren-hearted change
Should be by sentient nature deeply felt.

II.

And with the motions of her outward shows,
Prophetic leadings, I would almost say,
Guiding the observant spirit on its way,
Doth she men's minds harmoniously dispose.

The woods and streams are sympathetic powers,
Fountains of meek suggestion, to the man
Who with submissive energy would plan
His way of life in close and heated hours.

III.

How the dense morning compasses the town,
As though there were no other place beyond ;
And with its weeping mist bids us despond
For the old forms which one by one sink down !
How patiently the Minster stands, a vain
And beautiful monition, from the hill
Rising or rather growing, mute and still
Within a cavern of dark mist and rain !

IV.

O venerable Pile ! whose awful gloom
From my first boyish days hath been the sign
And symbol to me of the Faith divine
Of which thou art a birth ! from out the womb

Thou springest of the old majestic past,
Colossal times, which daily from the heart
Of this dear land with lingering steps depart,
Furling the mighty shadows that they cast.

v.

Past greatness is the shelter and the screen,
Beneath whose shade high hearts serenely lurk,
Catching true inspiration for the work
Which shall in other days be known and seen.
But greatness, which men do not understand,
Is felt a pressure not to be endured,
Where barren minds are painfully immured,
Like dwarfs within the grasp of giant hand.

vi.

How patiently the Minster stands! So well
Hath it time's mute indignities sustained,
It might for its own beauty have detained
The grandeur now withdrawing. Hark! the knell!

Durham, the uncrowned city, in meet grief
Prepares to celebrate within the shrine
The obsequies of her last Palatine ;
And nature's gloom is felt as a relief.

VII.

And hark—the knell again ! Within the town
Through the old narrow streets the sinuous crowds,
Meeting and parting, like the trailing clouds
Of a spent storm, are on the Abbey thrown.
How patiently it stands ! Once more—the knell !
The crowd with silent agitation stirred
And a contagious awe, like some shy herd,
Shrinks at the ponderous voice of that deep bell.

VIII.

The blameless prelate in the antique gloom
Of the low western Galilee is laid,
In the dark pageantry of death arrayed,
Nigh to the Venerable Beda's tomb :

And in the distant east beside the shrine
There is a grave, a little earth up-cast,
Wherein to-day a rich and solemn Past
Must be entombed with this old Palatine.

IX.

See how with drooping pall and nodding plume
In many a line along the misty nave
The sombre garments of the clergy wave,
Bearing the last prince-bishop to his tomb!
And, as the burden swayeth to and fro,
I see a glorious relic, most sublime,
A dread bequest from out the olden time,
Borne from the earth with ceremonial show.

X.

To one old priest were Keys and Sceptre given,
Two rights combined, the human and divine,
Blended in one high office as a shrine
Where earth might into contact come with
Heaven :—

This homage of great times unto the Cross,
All this magnificent conception, here
Outstretched upon the Palatine's frail bier
Is borne away ; and will men feel no loss ?

XI.

Hath not a sacred lamp gone out to-day
With ominous extinction ? Can ye fill,
Wild men ! the hallowed vases that ye spill,
And light our darkened shrines with purer ray ?
O where shall trust and love have fitting scope ?
Our children will cry out for very dearth
Of grandeur, fortified upon the earth
As refuges for faith and holy hope.

XII.

The cloud of music hushed still loads the air ;
The herald breaks the wand, while he proclaims
The sainted Palatine's puissant names :
Yon kingless throne is now for ever bare !

This is a gesture, whereby we may solve
The temper of the age ; upon this day,
And in St. Cuthbert's shrine, the times display
The secret hinge on which they now revolve.

XIII.

Cities, where ancient sacrilege was bold,
Nature with tenderest rites doth consecrate
Anew, and their remains incorporate
With her own placid mounds and forests old :
But an unholy action at its birth
Doth visibly uncrown a place, laid low
In all the rawness of dishonor : now
There is a glory less upon the earth.

XIV.

At night upon the Minster I looked down ;
In all the streets through dismal mist and rain
The lights were twinkling ; and the mighty fane
Seemed over its seven subject hills to frown.

This thought a light o'er my old age will shine,—
A grandeur, now no more on earth, touched me
With its last outskirts, for on bended knee
I oft was blessed by that Last Palatine !

XL.

The Ruined Cottage.

TO A LOVE-SICK FRIEND.

I.

A RICH and languid midsummer
Thou dost from thine own spirit bring,
And, like a pleased magician there,
Thou standest in thy self-drawn ring ;
And from thine own abounding youth
Thou spinnest threads of bright untruth,
And weavest of hope's starry beams
Upon love's busy loom a tapestry of dreams.

II.

A sunlight to thyself thou art—
Ah me ! it is a hapless lot,
And in old age exiles the heart
Unto a bare, unsunny spot :

Thou passest on from day to day,
As though life were the Milky Way ;
Duty hath chartered not thy bliss,
For joy well earned is no such twilight thing as
this.

III.

Come with me to this mountain vale,
And in meek nature's twilight see
In after years how wan and pale
Thy self-illuminated dream will be,
Like yon poor dull and murky speck
By sunset left a joyless wreck,
What time its mellow slanting ray
From out of Langdale sent its last long look this
way.

IV.

The evening wind is rude and high
Upon this wild deserted green ;
The mountains in the pallid sky
Rise up with outline cold and keen :

The splashing lake, the rocking trees
To me are mournful images ;
Like uncrowned household gods are they,
Unworshipped now amid this pastoral decay.

v.

Here once were happy peace and smiles,
And no less happy, holy tears ;
Here once were love's domestic wiles,
And constancy that grew with years ;
Here conjugal delights were lured,
And simple trials were endured,
And, with his helpmate at his side,
The shepherd's cares were light, his sorrows
sanctified.

vi.

See here the drooping ash-tree shade
Meet for the matron's out-door work,
The common where the children played,
The neighboring copse where they might lurk.

Ah ! many a merry sunburnt face
Hath come and gone in this green place,
And Loughrigg heard the echos play—
A year wakes fewer now than then were waked
each day.

VII.

I see the blue smoke rising up,
The ruined house resume its roof,
The streamlet in a rough stone cup
Protected from the horse's hoof ;
I hear the vespers of the bees
In those two sister linden trees ;
And there the gilded hollies shine
Through the close network of the clambering
eglantine.

VIII.

I see the happy rustic pair—
O how my heart the vision stirs—
And four sweet children, wild and fair,
Peeping among the junipers ;

While o'er the lake with tremulous swell
Eight strikes upon the chapel bell,
Within its cincture of green trees
Drawing all thoughts unto its pensive sanctities.

IX.

Did ever dream come true like this ?
If o'er the wide earth we could roam
Should we detect a better bliss,
A simpler or a nobler home ?
A few souls moving day and night
Within an orbit of delight,
While they with mutual help fulfil
In meek self-sacrifice and want our Father's Will !

X.

Believe me there is not a bliss
To bear the pressure of hard life,
Which hath not been well-forged like this,
And tempered in our mortal strife.
Old age is miserably poor
Which hath not thus laid by its store

Of cheerfulness from good deeds done,
And lawful prisage laid on conquests duly won.

XI.

Yet even here behold the wreck,
That voiceless tenement behold;
The past a sun-deserted speck,
Whose story is thus sadly told
By all this melancholy round
Of lonely form and cheerless sound,
Which to the grieving spirit call
With plaintive wooing, a most touching pastoral.

XII.

And in the lone and pale ash-trees,
And o'er the white and withered grass,
With what a moaning doth the breeze
O'er this unhaunted moorland pass.
It makes me sad to see it throw
The blossom from the linden bough,
While by the little waterfalls
The white owl hoots from out the ivy-strangled
walls.

XIII.

And here and there and everywhere,
The eyeless casements all about,
Like lost babes wailing in the air,
The piteous nightbirds ever shout.
It is a thought to consecrate
This moorland with pathetic state,—
That Human Nature many a day
Here lived, and loved, and like a cloud hath passed
away.

XLI.

The Rothay.

DEAR Stream ! indeed upon thy brink
I often am constrained to think
That thou must so enamored be
Of thine own pensive melody,
It is a wonder that some day
Thou dost not thy soft current stay,
And listen in a green recess
Unto the sudden silentness
Which would be in the widowed air,
Were thy sweet voice no longer there.
How dull would all the meadows look
Bereaved of their own tinkling brook !
The fringing birchtrees that beat time
With tendrils dipping to the chime,
How sad would they be and forlorn,
Were there no breath, of murmur born,

To agitate with cool delight
Their moistened tresses day and night !
In truth that pleasant shady sadness
Would all its meek reserve of gladness,
Like a mute mourner, soon forswear,
Were there no choral waters there
With changeful note to suit a tale
To all who pass along the vale.
I do believe the very bees
Would quit the roadside linden trees,
When summer afternoons are long,
Didst thou not wile them with thy song
To keep up in the well-pleased air
A drowsy emulation there.
Indeed, sweet Brook ! we cannot part
With thee ; for to the vale thou art,
To grieve, to comfort, to rejoice,
An altogether needful voice.

And yet, dear Stream ! I wonder much
A deep desire doth never touch
Thy waterbreaks awhile to stay,
Self-gathered in yon mossy bay,

Awhile in quiet depths to glisten,
Awhile the distant sounds to listen
Of thine own gushings far above,
Which, like the wooing of a dove,
That penetrates the breezeless wood,
The breath upon thy sylvan flood
May waft into thy curious ear,
Confusing sweetly far with near.

And better still if from on high
There came no kindred melody ;
For then it were a joy to know,
What *would be*, didst thou cease to flow ;
And it were sweet for thee to measure
The fulness of the daily treasure
Which thou art to this vale always,
Blythe Chanter of a hundred lays !
So kindly hearts might love to see
How bare a place the world would be,
Bereaved of all the lustre won
From what hath been or may be done
Through faith, through love, self-sacrifice,
And our domestic charities,

Which, as we waken every morn,
Remind us life may yet be borne.
Ah ! Rothay ! now on thee doth wait
For evermore a poet's fate,
A captive, bound both eye and ear,
In his own sweetness prisoner,
To whom his crafty melody
Is no such power of simple glee
As unto others it may seem,
Who lie and listen by the stream
Of song, which flows in many a fall
Of thought and language musical.

Then mightest thou begin once more
A deeper strain than heretofore,
Cheered—not by knowing that thou art
A power with which we cannot part,
Nor any other conscious pride
Unmeet for such fair river-side—
But by the buoyant powers which rise
With something of a meek surprise,
When partial self-restraint hath given
To common joys the bliss of Heaven ;

For when sequestered from sweet thought
By weary cares, we have been brought
With thirsty heart and eager want
Once more unto our pensive haunt,
It seems like thee, my household River
Brighter and lovelier far than ever,
With fresh dimensions of true beauty
Seen in relief against hard duty.

O joyous art thou, festal Earth !
For every month with some new birth
Of glory waits on thee : there is
A beating pulse of truest bliss
Deep in the black and glossy lake,
The yew-crowned steep, the hazel brake :
A golden light of gladness quivers
Submersed in the transparent rivers ;
And there are ministers and powers
Among the still or beckoning flowers ;
The shiplike clouds, which overwhelm
The azure sky, have at their helm
An inward love to steer them right :
Clear visitations of delight

Thrill through the lone and swampy ground
With sight at unison with sound :
The creatures in their perfect motions,
The tides and currents of the oceans,
The growing trees,—for ever move
By most transcendent law of love
And blameless will ; yet have no power
Of self-restraint—not for an hour !—
And therefore, blessèd Earth ! it is,
One moment of pure mortal bliss,
Ay or pure mortal grief, is worth
A hundred years of thy mute mirth,
A hundred years of moons that range
’Twixt sameness beautiful and change
Which is not change, but to man’s eye
His inward mutability
Reflected in the earth and sky.
No love for its own sake can we
Bestow on thy tranquillity ;
But, when received into the strife
Of feeling heart or pensive life,

Our spirit sheds on thee a dew
Which doth almost create thee new ;
And then, O Earth ! how dear thou art,
How sacred to each tender heart !

Thou knowest not the wondrous blending
Of bright and dark in the ascending
Scale of life, the never ending
Weaving of all times and places,
And charities and wrongs and graces,
Of love and sorrow, morn and even,
Youth and age, and earth and Heaven.
No joy is realized, until
By power of the harmonious will
And the submissive reason, it
Will, all unquestioning, admit
Stern duty with a yielding grace
To be enthroned upon its place ;
And hath been taught to come and go,
As task and leisure ebb and flow,
And it for duty's coming waits
A humble portress at the gates.

Thou canst not know, dear Stream ! the joy,
Without misgiving or alloy,
Which abstinence and self-control
Spread, like a sunrise, o'er the soul.
Thou canst not know what flight is given,
Unto the very doors of Heaven,
To hearts which from self-sacrifice,
Like birds from lowly places, rise,
Who soar the highest when their mirth
Is humblest on the lowly earth.

Thy song cheers not thyself, dear River !
Because it is a song for ever ;
It is thyself, thy life, and not
A gift, a separable lot,
Of whose deep tenderness and beauty
Thou canst by self-restraint and duty
Win sweet returns or augmentations :
It hath no daily new creations—
Fresh births which come from sapient glee,
From wisdom, from simplicity,
When mortal joys themselves refrain
For virtue's sake, then flow again.

So are we made ; unquiet pleasure,
Which the calm spirit cannot measure,
Endureth not, and is no treasure :
The mirth we cannot put away
Is but a mirth on its first day :
The joy which we can not restrain
Is but a liberty from pain :
Where self and pleasure are but one,
That soul is morally undone !

XLII.

English Hedges.

SUGGESTED BY A PASSAGE IN MR. LAING'S NOTES OF A
TRAVELLER.

I.

Nor without deep memorial truth are ye,
Partitions of sweet thorn ! which intersect
Our blythest counties, bidding us reflect
Full oft upon our rural ancestry,
The unambitious thanes of Saxon days ;
Who with their modest manors well content,
Of corn and mead and fragrant bean-field blent
And woody pasture, lived in simple ways

And patriarchal virtues, ere the hand
Of Norman rule was felt ; or feudal right,
Baneful exotic ! settled like a blight
On the free customs of the pastoral land.

II.

Behold—a length of hundred leagues displayed—
That web of old historic tapestry
With its green patterns, broidered to the eye,
Is with domestic mysteries inlaid !
Here hath a nameless sire in some past age
In quaint uneven stripe or curious nook,
Clipped by the wanderings of a snaky brook,
Carved for a younger son an heritage.
There set apart, an island in a bower,
With right of road among the oakwoods round,
Are some few fields within a ring-fence bound,
Perchance a daughter's patrimonial dower.

III.

So may we dream, while to our fancy come
Kind incidents and sweet biographies
Scarce fanciful, as flowing from the ties
And blissful bonds which consecrate our home

To be an earthly heaven. From shore to shore
That ample, wind-stirred net-work doth ensnare
Within its delicate meshes many a rare
And rustic legend, which may yield good store
Of touching thought unto the passenger :
Domestic changes, families decayed,
And love or hate, in testaments displayed
By dying men, still in the hedgerows stir.

IV.

When Rome her British Eagles did recall,
Time saw the ages weave that web of green
Assiduously upon the rural scene,
Ere yet the lowly-raftered Saxon hall
Was watched from Norman fortalice. The fields
Escutcheons were, borne by those equal thanes,
While herald spring went wandering up the lanes,
Blazoning with green and white the yeomen's
shields.

And as the Church grew there, beneath her eyes
The breadth of hedgerows grew with her, not loth
To be, as freedom is, an undergrowth
Of that true mother of all liberties.

V.

The Saxon hedgerows stand, though twice assailed;
Once greedy barons in their pride of birth
For hunting grounds imparked the fertile earth,
Till peasant joys and pastoral ditties failed :
Now upstart wealth absorbs both far and nigh
The small ancestral farms : woe worth the day,
When fortunes overgrown shall eat away
The heart of our old English yeomanry !
The hedges still survive, shelters for flowers,
An habitation for the singing birds,
Cool banks of shadow grateful to the herds,
A charm unknown in any land but ours.

VI.

Ye modest relics of a simple past,
Most frail and most enduring monument,
Ye still are here, when Norman Keep is rent
And cruel chace disparked into a waste
Of cheerful tillage : ye uninjured rise,
To nature and to human wants allied,
Therefore outliving works of lordly pride ;—
How rightly dear for what ye symbolize !

Long may the Saxon hieroglyphic stand,
A precious trophy in the yeoman's eye,
The wisdom of our ancient polity
Written in leafy cypher o'er the land!

XLIII.

Mountain Tarns.

I.

O ASKEST thou of me
What store of thoughtful glee
By mountain tarns is lying,
That I to such grim nooks
From my dull-hearted books
Should evermore be flying ?

II.

Go thou, and spend an hour
In autumn fog and shower
Amid the thundering rills,
Or hear the breezy sigh
Of summer quiet die
Among the noonday hills.

III.

The eagle's royal soul
Is nurtured in the roll
And echo of the thunder,
And feeds for evermore
Amid the summits hoar
On sights and sounds of wonder.

IV.

The murmur of the stone
With hoarse and hollow moan
Self-loosened from the height,—
The waterfall's white showers
In midnight's deepest hours
Creating sound and light,—

V.

The pauses in the blowing
Of winds, when oxen lowing
Are heard from vales beneath,
The under-world of care
Scarce burdening the air
With its poor plaintive breath,—

VI.

The fragrance of the noon,
The nearness of the moon,
The swampy mosses tingling,
The strife of peace and noise,
Like the sorrows and the joys
In earthly lots commingling,—

VII.

To all such sight and sound
Is the eagle's being bound,
A destiny of bliss ;
These spells his spirit wake,
These influences make
The eagle what he is.

VIII.

So I of lowly birth,
A workman on the earth,
Would cast myself apart,
That I a little time
From dreariness sublime
Might win a royal heart.

IX.

The golden-crownèd kings
Are often abject things ;
I would not be as they :
But mountain winds and waves
Teach no men to be slaves,
But with high minds obey.

X.

Great emperors forget,
In jewelled places set,
The human heart below,
And with no fellows near
They often cease to hear
Its holy ebb and flow.

XI.

But I from mountain throne
Would oftentimes come down,
And leave unto the breeze
And cataract to fill
With echos at their will
My dreary royalties.

XII.

I would in mountain haunt
But quicken the sweet want
Of love and blisses mild ;
And I would alternate
My pomp of regal state
With the humors of a child.

XIII.

There is a power to bless
In hill-side loneliness,
In tarns and dreary places,
A virtue in the brook,
A freshness in the look
Of mountain's joyless faces.

XIV.

And I would have my heart
From littleness apart,
A love-anointed thing,
Be set above my kind,
In my unfettered mind
A veritable king.

xv.

And so when life is dull,
Or when my heart is full
Because coy loves have frowned,
I wander up the rills
To stones and tarns and hills,—
I go there to be crowned.

XLIV.

OUR thoughts are greater than ourselves, our
dreams

Ofttimes more solid than our acts ; our hope
With more of substance and of shadow teems
Than our thin joys, and hath a nobler scope.

O sons of men ! there is a Presence here,
Here in our own undying spirits, which
With an unearthly wealth doth oft enrich
The reason hourly sanctified by fear.

Herewith men prophesy, herewith men press
To their own hearts in studious loneliness
Forms greater than they dare to tell : beneath
The shadow of their own imaginings
They sit, withdrawn and sheltered ; for a wreath
Encircles them, a wreath of Angel's wings.

XLV.

I **FEEL** a change,—and yet I know not how
Or where or when, or what it doth betoken ;
But sure I am that voices which have spoken
Daily within my soul are speechless now.
For thought or fancy, hope, joy, smile and tear,
My being is not what it was last year.
And a new power, which will not yet reveal
Its name and purpose, hath already gone
This way or that, as though it fain would steal
And climb unchallenged to some inward throne :
While I with fretful guess go sounding on
Depth after depth of my vexed mind, to dodge
The bold, unbidden stranger, and dislodge
All influence, unmeasured and unknown.

XLVI.

Effusion on hearing of a Friend's Death

FROM MALARIA AT NAPLES.

I.

AND he is dead ! Mourn, all ye moonlit hills,
Ye woods that sleep so sweetly in the beams,
Thou lake that twinklest like the light in dreams,
Thou dappled sky ; and ye, O tuneful rills
Thus charmed to silentness, awake and call
For power unto the raving waterfall !

II.

And he is dead ! Dear, blessèd spirit ! there
By the wild river doth his dwelling stand,
The one dark spot in all the moonlit land
Which lies beneath this mountain summit bare.
O Nature ! my o'erburdened heart relieve,
Ye woods and hills, in mournful concert grieve !

III.

Up many a vale I see the glimmering light
Of scattered farms ; I hear the sheepdogs bay
The quiet hanging moon, and far away
The echos travel. O how calm is night !
And through the gloom I can no peak descry
Which was not dear to Edward's gentle eye.

IV.

And he is passed away,—with snowy sail
No more shall cleave Winander's azure deeps,
No more shall homeward wend while moonlight
sleeps
On Brathay's ivied bridge and woody vale !
All, all is passed ; a few calm months have rolled,
And all that world of joy is cold—is cold !

V.

O Italy ! thou wert his waking dream,
And thou hast proved his grave ; we little know
The ills which from self-chosen pleasures flow.
Ah me ! at length the moon with silver gleam

Hath struck his house-top, and the glittering rill
Shoots past the bridge, and then is dark and
still.

VI.

To-day I heard the cuckoo first this year ;
It rose from his own grounds, an ominous cry,
Which with old arts and wiles advanced more
nigh,
Then thrown far off, when it had been most
near :
This do I fondly note ; such chances are
Not without light in sorrow's calendar.

VII.

Thus yearly hath the warning deathbell tolled
Into my startled ear amid the chime
Of youth's long holydays ; and every time
Bereavement seems more desolate and cold :
And I am now to grief less reconciled
Than when I was in pureness more a child.

VIII.

Ah woful lot ! when sorrow hath become
A source of self-disturbance, not a thing
From which the growths of faith and meekness
spring ;
The world too much, too long hath been my home ;
And this chill shock goes further, deeper in,
As though 'twere fathoming new depths of sin.

IX.

And rainest thou, O Moon ! so calm a shower
Upon Vesuvio's beacon-height, the sea
And the white crescent of Parthenope,
The garden terrace, and sweet lemon-bower ?
And canst thou strike from out the hollow skies
The tranquil spot where that dear outcast lies ?

X.

I too within the moonlight of sad thought
Can compass far-off joys and long-past days ;
Memory can strike with most pathetic rays
Kind pensive looks and tender actions wrought

In times bygone, and bring them round her
now,
White flowers, tear-freshened, for pale sorrow's
brow.

XI.

How beautiful are thy constraints, O Death !
On our affections so benignly felt,
Making all hearts, ranks, ages melt
To one true brotherhood before thy breath !
I feel this night a fresh access of love
For my lost friend, which Heaven doth not
reprove.

XII.

Merciful God ! with Whom the spirits are,
Most holy Saviour ! on the mountain top
The earth Thou madest, overspread with hope,
Breathes consolation in the quiet air :
Death is Thine earnest that our souls are free, ✓
O blessèd are the dead which die in Thee :

XIII.

Yea blessèd, else would earth or sky display
Some trouble when the youthful are laid low.—
So soft, so calm may be the moonlight show,
When I, perchance still young, am called away,
No trouble stir that night on Brathay's shore
When I can hear his woodland voice no more !

XLVII.

The Contrast.

I.

O EARTH, meek mother ! with thy powers at
war,
How rudely 'gainst thy harmonies we strike !
The voice of men and cities seems to jar
Thy sounds more than thy stillness : how unlike
These pastoral bleatings or this wild bird's wails
Absorbed so kindly into all these mountain vales—

II.

Absorbed, or rather by true love prolonged
Through echo's lonely outposts in far links,
And justly ; else earth surely would have
wronged
That old coeval sound : but whoso thinks



That she to men's mutations will be chained
Deems lightly of the place to which she is
ordained.

III.

Weak and dejected, for the gift of song,
Intemperately used, had sapped my health,
I lived in open air the whole day long
In hill or wood, extracting thence a wealth
Of chaste delights my future toil to bless,
Mingled with just self-blame for fancy's late
excess.

IV.

Within a natural temple of old pine,
On whose grey columns and red withered floor
The sun with noontide force could barely
shine,
I lay at ease ; around me a gay store
Of cuckoo-plant, with white and winking eyes
Furled and unfurled, among the starting roots did
rise.



V.

Invisible creatures rustled in the moss
And the crisp leaves ; a wild suspicious eye
Looked from a thrush's nest : and at a loss
To find his master, closely harbored nigh,
My dog at times among the boughs was seen,
Like some white thing that floats deep in the
waters green.

VI.

And by the tiny trumpets of the bees
Was I well soothed, and the blythe insect hum ;
And winds were born and died within the trees,
Prisoned and stifled in the leafy gloom :
The plaint of lambs, the tinkling of a brook,
Refined by distance, came unto this sombre nook.

VII.

Aloft the stockdoves seemed with their deep
cooing
All the broad wood to quiet and control,
An eloquence like the continual wooing
Of holy thoughts within a Christian soul :



Remote I saw some horses in the plough,
The world—seen, as the Saint should see it, far
below.

VIII.

God's blessing was upon the earth, all bound
In deep content and joy from vale to height ;
There was that concord of harmonious sound,
Those thrillings, almost vocal, of strong light,
Suggesting to transported ear and eye
A present Power, diviner than tranquillity.

IX.

Homeward I went, with thoughts such as might
wait
Upon the vision in that shelter given,
In meditation chastened yet elate,
When all things seem transparent, and true
Heaven
Glows through all earthly loveliness and power,
As though the veil were being consumed hour
after hour.



X.

Then suddenly by duty was I led
Unto a scene of desperate misery,
A moaning sinner on his dying bed,
A drunkard—oh how unprepared to die !
Too weak for prayer, for Sacrament unmeet,
O Heaven ! what sight was this a pastor's eye to
greet !

XI.

But let us veil the scene : a cooling breeze
Through the porch honeysuckle gently sighing,
The singing birds, clear hills, and budding
trees—
Amid all this the sinner lay a-dying :
O when I quitted that most dismal room
The outward sunshine was all baffled by the gloom.

XII.

Most inharmonious world ! which can compress
Such sweetness and such horror in an hour,
As though all beauty and all fearfulness
Turned on one hinge, were but one folding door ;

Each counteracting each, with woe and mirth
In mutual eclipse o'ershadowing the earth.

XIII.

Such and so solemn is the pastor's life,
Strange alternations which, well weighed, may
yield
Reasoning sublime, and contemplation rife
With virtuous purposes by faith to build
The soul which doth among such fortunes
range.
The death-bell tolls : Christ aid him in his fearful
change !



XLVIII.

The Dream of King Cræsus.

KING Cræsus dreamed a dream : the livelong day
His heart was swollen with imperial pride,
And his eye surfeited with blaze of gems
And gleamy metals, and his weak ear soothed
By fair-tongued Lydians : but in the still night
King Cræsus dreamed a dream : 'twas Nemesis
That out of the mute darkness wove that dream.
He slept, and in his sleep he saw his son,
Atys, the beautiful, the chosen Atys,
The youthful warrior,—him he saw in dark,
Confused embrace with hazy struggling forms,
Masses, which peopled all the blank of night,
Like bruised embossing on a lance-worn shield.



He could not extricate from thence, nor clear
 One object which man's eye should recognize ;
 Only he saw Atys—Atys he saw,
 His son, undoubted, manifest : ah woe !
 Only he saw Atys,—torn with the point
 Of some invisible implement ; he saw
 The point, and Atys, and his own child's blood.
 Such was the dream King Cræsus dreamed that
 night.

There is a sound as of a nuptial feast
 Throughout the low-roofed Sardis ; tabor, lute
 And Phrygian pipe in sweet accord are there,
 Making such music as the easterns love,
 Monotonous and wailing : there are lights
 And cries and banquet sounds, and all the throng
 Of nuptial celebration. Dark and dim
 From Mother Dindymene's sacred hill
 Hermus flows down into the noisy plain,
 Where night is turned to day, and hurries on
 His waters troubled with the unwonted glare
 Into the quiet, misty distance. Oh
 Strange apparition is a flowing stream



By a gay city in the obscure night !
 It is the nuptial feast of Atys. Ay,
 And will King Cræsus baffle destiny,
 And flaunt the venerable Nemesis
 With nuptial feasts and women's chambers ? No—
 For though the warrior's arms be laid aside,
 And though the boar-spear for the hunt be thrown
 In some neglected corner, though the walls
 That rang with armor wave with tapestry,—
 Yet sooner shall the soil instead of fruit
 Bring forth sharp-pointed things, and mortals reap
 Lance-heads for harvests, than the holy path
 Of orderly and reverend fate be turned
 This way or that. Mute matter and the beasts
 Achieve Heaven's wrath or love upon the earth.

What ails the King ? Why seeks he never now
 The vaulted treasure-house, the metals, gems,
 And costly inwrought works ? His restless eye
 Is palled with brightness, and his regal pride—
 That hath gone down, ay, sunk, for ever sunk
 In the deep ocean of paternal love.
 Yet wherefore looketh he with curious search

Through all the palace and among his guards
 And on state days and in the public place,
 Lest a keen weapon or some pointed thing
 Should come nigh Atys ? He would charm the
 life

Of the brave, princely boy ; he would rob fate
 (And cannot kings do all things ?) of the prize.
 It is the Dream : that Dream is in his heart,
 Stirring, like spring within the unconscious earth
 Setting the unborn summer in array.

The power that wove the Dream doth also work
 Out in the world. The toils of Nemesis
 Are closing round thee, Cræsus ! oh how near !

There came a stranger to the Lydian court,
 A man of unclean hands, a fratricide,
 And yet withal a gentle being, one
 Whose noble blood of Phrygia's royal line
 Was least of his endowments ; one of those
 Whose fortune is a mystery on the earth,
 A painful problem, gendering thought and tears
 Even in the sage, and in the unrestrained
 A refuge oft for easy misbelief—

As though by some dread fate perversely thrown
 Upon the very opposite of all
 Their passions and propensions, not allowed
 To hit the scope at which their nature aims :
 Men are they, by compulsion of the world
 And the disturbing force of circumstance
 Led forth, like victims, out of their own sphere
 To act some other spirit's destiny :
 Who pass away, still having in themselves
 A better destiny all unfulfilled,
 A holier, milder being unevolved.

Such was Adrastus, with a gentle tinge
 Of softness and a partial hallowing
 Of deep romance, an almost wayward love
 Of sadness, and a clinging to the woe
 Which had exhausted and absorbed the hope
 Of his whole being. He had shed the blood
 Of his own brother most unwittingly,
 And came to Cræsus that from him he might
 Receive the expiation of the times,—
 A cleansing power, most rightly gathered up
 Into the state and person of the prince,

A portion of divinity enthroned,
 Like a peculiar instinct, in a king,
 Who by his unity no less than by
 His height doth adumbrate the One Supreme.
 With running water and the kingly word
 Adrastus was made clean, and dwelt, a guest
 Of Cræsus, I might almost say, a son.
 When by the hearth the stranger's shadow fell
 King Cræsus knew not that it was the cloud
 Of Nemesis upon his royal house :
 So little venerable in our sight
 Is present Providence—when past, how great !

All things concur with Nemesis : she sent
 A fugitive from Phrygia thus to be
 Her shadow and her symbol in the house
 Of the great king whom she had singled out
 To teach men, by his eminence and griefs,
 The righteousness of Heaven. In other lands
 She makes fresh preparation, and the ring
 Of destiny is slowly narrowing in ;
 The victim cannot stir, he cannot do
 A transitory act, but he therein

Is riveting the future on himself.

Cræsus ! awake ! Thy Dream is on thee,—rise !

Whence are these foreign husbandmen, who
throng

The audience hall at Sardis, suppliants rude ?

They are from pastoral Mysia, come to tell

How a huge boar from rough Olympus robs

The sheep-folds, thins the lowing kine, and treads

The vineyards and the flax and flowery maize

Beneath his feet. “ Will Cræsus deign to send

“ His princely son and famous Lydian dogs

“ And hunters of renown, to free the land,

“ And leave his name all o’er the Mysian fields

“ Fragrant as incense to the pastoral tribes ? ”

To whom the King made answer : “ Speak no more

“ Of Atys ; the new-married, as ye know,

“ Have got sweet labors of their own at home.

“ The hounds and hunters ye are free to take,

“ And rid fair Mysia of the uncouth beast.”

It grieved the heart of Atys ; he was grieved

That he should be shut out from manly toils,

From winning love and walking in men’s eyes

A prince by deeds as well as royal birth.
 He came unto his father and knelt down,
 Knelt down before his father and his King,
 And sued with piteous words: "O royal Sire!
 "With our progenitors it was esteemed
 "That battlefield and hunting-ground should be
 "The theatres of princes:—Hath the law
 "Bee changed in Lydia that thou shuttest me
 "From such employ? Father! what cowardice,
 "Or what faint spirit hast thou marked in me?
 "How shall I come and go within the streets
 "Of this great Sardis, how endure the eyes
 "That speak worse words than those men would
 address
 "Unto me if I were not prince? Dear Sire!
 "My very bride will point me with her finger,
 "And call me 'Woman,' wishing that she had
 "A man to be the father of her sons!
 "I pray thee let me go unto this hunt,
 "Or reason with me why I should not go."
 Cræsus was mindful of his bygone youth,
 Which was an echo to the young man's words.

A teardrop stood within the proud King's eye ;
 He was a father, and he wept and smiled.
 " O Atys, my son Atys, I have not,
 " The gods forbend it ! aught in thee observed
 " Unprincely, or beneath the graciousness
 " Born to the sons of kings. I had a dream,"
 (And here a trembling passed upon the King)
 " A dream one night, when I had spent the day
 " Amid my treasures : I would not disturb
 " The quiet happiness of thy young life
 " By speaking of the vision, but I kept
 " The burden at my heart, and there it lay
 " The secret cause of my unwonted mien
 " And gesture ; nay, in many little ways
 " It hath unkinged me. Atys ! it declared
 " Thy span of life to be but brief : it spoke
 " Of death by weapon-point. Therefore it was
 " I hastened on thy nuptials, if so be
 " I might for my life-time enjoy thy life,
 " A theft, a stolen joy, the spoil of fate.
 " Thou art my chosen son, nay art thou not
 " Mine only one, thy brother being deaf,

“ Not one whom men could bow to as a king ? ”

Young Atys listened, not without some awe,
For he had piety towards the gods,
And dreams and portents were unto his soul
Its faith and fear, not wholly without love.

✓ O the sweet science of our youth, to find
A way wherein our wills may go, a cause
For action in the very reasonings
Whereby men prove to us we should not act !
Thus Atys spoke, the princely casuist,
Pouring his honey in a father's ear :—
“ O father ! blessèd art thou for the love
“ Wherewith thou hast thus lovèd me ! and yet
“ Its very fervor leadeth thee astray
“ From the true purport of the dream. 'Tis thus :
“ I am to die by point of iron spear.
“ Father, dear father ! are the tusks of boars
“ In that green Mysia made of iron points ?
“ Elsewhere they are of bone ! Now art thou not,
“ Dear father ! art thou not a timorous king
“ And an unwise ? Why truly I shall think
“ It is my mother governs Lydia now,

“ So good, so kind, and yet so timorous,

“ So very full of sweet maternal wiles.”

He shook his flaxen hair from off his brow,

And looked and laughed into the old King's face :

And the King laughed again at his rude boy,

Atys, the beautiful, the flaxen-haired.

Cræsus ! beware, the Dream is on thee now !

But the Dream wrought ; he let young Atys go :

Fathers are evil pleaders with their sons.

King Cræsus sat within his audience hall,

Silent and troubled, like a man who feels

He hath done that which he shall one day rue.

How cold, how weak the words of Atys seemed

Now that the youth was gone ; yea, he was gone,

Atys, the beautiful, the flaxen-haired,

Whose eloquence was his young face and not

His reasonings, his light laugh and not his speech.

For a sweet look and for a pretty gibe

Atys, the flaxen-haired, was sold to fate.

A daily bargain is it on the earth ;

Forsooth to-day a hundred sons have been

To bondage sold in foolishness of love

Which is not love, through weakness falling short.
 O father Cræsus—yet it was the Dream.
 The Dream hath reached King Cræsus. And
 behold !

Where'er he turns dread Nemesis is there.
 Things turn to Nemesis beneath his touch.
 His servants are the slaves of fate : his guest
 Fate's shadow, and the sunbeam in the eye
 Of Atys is the light of fate ; the shake
 Of his long flaxen hair belonged to fate.
 The royal house is compassed by a Power
 Which hath absorbed all wills into its own.
 Sorrow and mirth, the hour of kingly pride
 Within the treasure-house, the nuptial feast,
 The blood in Phrygia spilled, the mountain boar,
 The husbandmen, the fame of Lydian dogs,
 The kneeling boy, the gibe, the flaxen hair,—
 All grow into one shadow, and advance
 Upon King Cræsus, like an angry god.
 King Cræsus saw it not ; he did not know
 He was become the centre of his Dream.
 Alas ! King Cræsus, we are all like thee,

Fate teaching us the worship of free-will.

King Cræsus sat within the audience-hall,
 Silent and troubled : Atys had gone forth
 To make his preparations for the hunt.
 The monarch bade them call the Phrygian prince ;
 Adrastus stood before him. " Noble guest !"
 King Cræsus spake, " amid the royal state
 " Wherewith thou seest me compassed, at my
 heart
 " A hot uneasy secret hath lain hid,
 " Which threatens now to bring forth bitter fruit
 " Of dire affliction. I have cleansed thy hands,
 " And given thee kingly greeting, and a home,
 " And appanage, and all things met for thee,
 " As though thou hadst been Atys, my true son.
 " Nay, stranger, I recount not these small things
 " As debts for which thou wert to pay me back
 " Measure for measure ; nor upbraidingly
 " As though the kindness lay too light on thee.
 " I seek return most different in kind,
 " I would thou shouldst go forth unto this hunt.
 " Thou art a gentle, princely man ; I trow

“ Atys would be as safe beneath thy charge

“ As though king Cræsus went with him. The
land

“ Is wild, and there are perils of the way ;

“ Haply a father magnifies them, yet

“ I would that Atys went with thee, my guest !

“ And thou too hast great sires, unto whose deeds

“ ’Twere well to link thine own ; thy stalwart
prime

“ Without achievements should not thus elapse :

“ Adrastus ! thou art born a Phrygian prince,

“ The column of an old and generous name !”

“ Monarch and father !” thus Adrastus said,

“ I should not otherwise have sought this hunt.

“ A sorrow-stricken man should not essay

“ To join himself unto his peers : the gods

“ Have taken him apart unto themselves,

“ Clouding his days ; nor have I now a soul

“ For martial enterprise, or glorious deeds

“ Of princely prowess, isolated thus

“ From my long line of royal ancestors,

“ Thro’ exile, ay, thro’ worse than exile dead.

“ Yet for thy sake I go, content to have
“ Thy joy for my reward in that sweet hour
“ When I shall give back Atys to thine arms.”

King Cræsus left the audience-hall assured.
Ah ! he hath drawn the Dream unto himself,
And of his own free will embraced his fate.
There is not now a fibre in his heart
At which that Vision pulls not every hour.

Methinks I see the glimmering plain outspread
At sunny dawn, and Hermus flowing by,
And the blue mountains, north and south and east,
With Sypylus, which half fills up the west,
Catching the sunrise, in whose rifted crags
The thunder tolls all summer, day and night,—
And the white walls of Sardis, and the king
Waving his last farewell from near the gate.
And o’er the Acropolis I see the snow
On Tmolus, where the long-lived shepherds dwell.
Tending their sable goats upon the downs
With purple saffron streaked, while breezy morn
Wafts o’er the plain from out the shrubby glens
That aromatic breath so dear to Pan.

And old Pactolus guides his lucid stream
Between two lips of ruddy sand, which glow
Like webs of golden tissue in the sun.
Far off the tomb of Alyattes gleams
Through the low mist, whose sluggish climbing
folds

Its lofty cone o'ertops, and shoots on high,
Clearing its way into the radiant air.
And in the wind the lake of Gyges seems
Of silver shot with black, whose bright expanse
Regions of plummy marsh-plants intersect,
From out whose nodding coverts at that hour
The countless swans rise up to greet the morn
With tuneless pipings, which, with resonance
Conjoined of insect-swarms that from the lake
Keep off the thirsty herds, now only thrill
That solitary shore of Lydian tombs.
Then the brave band of men and dogs went on
O'er hill and dale, and, when the sunbeams glanced
Upon the spear-points of the horsemen there,
It was the brightness of the Dream that moved
With them to its fulfilment constantly.

Atys, with beamy spear-points girdled round,
Beguiled Adrastus somewhat of his woe,
Recounting stories of the famous hunts,
Which he had heard within the banquet hall
By rhapsodists recited to the king
From Lydian chronicles: and then he spoke
Of his young bride, or bade Adrastus note
The plumage of the bird that darted by,
Or the thick fleets of rapid ortolans
Which swam along the surface of the maize
Or on a sudden sank and disappeared.
He asked the name of this or that blue cone
Which glimmered in the sun, or thoughtlessly
He pointed to the dogs, and asked the prince
If there were such in Phrygia, then confused
He talked of other things scarce knowing what.
Then languor seized him, and the weariness
Of the tame distance, and they had some hours
Of silent riding; but a bubbling brook,
And hunter's fare and slumber in the shade
Of single plane trees, such as here and there,
Like tents, rise up in those unwoody parts,

Refreshed the youth, and ever from his talk
 Adrastus gathered peace and freshness too.
 And thus they travelled to the Mysian border,
 In its green mountain glens to meet the Dream.

How beautiful are still and starry nights
 On the great plains of Asia! And how clear
 The yellow moon in glossy-foliaged dells
 Where shrunken brooks are tinkling all the night!
 Oh I shall think unto my dying day
 How beautiful are nights on Asia's plains!
 The little tents, the smouldering fire of wood,
 The scattered arms, the horses on the plain,—
 Dim, dusky figures, feeding or at rest—
 What Atys and Adrastus saw is still
 Seen nightly in that old unchanging land.

Amid the green and bosky roots, from which
 Mysian Olympus rises, there doth lurk
 A stony hollow, thickly overgrown
 With arbutus and straight lentiscus shoots
 And ragged stone-pines: there land-turtles dwell,
 And bright innocuous snakes, and cruel boars.
 And by the Mysian shepherds thither led

After most blythe reception, Atys stood,
 And prince Adrastus and the Lydian band ;
 And in the midst the boar at bay. The chace
 With all its wonted stirring circumstance
 Aroused the spirit of the Phrygian prince,
 And with the power of old past times relaxed
 Grief's pressure ; and he hurled his lance
 With fierce unsteady eagerness, nor hit
 The raging boar : but youthful Atys fell.
 The brittle shoots of the lentiscus broke
 Beneath the fall, and to the naked sky
 The closing eyes of Atys were upturned.
 And in that stony hollow, which to-day
 The aromatic summer gently fills
 As calm as though no blood had been shed there,
 Was Atys, youthful Atys in his blood,
 Atys the beautiful, the flaxen-haired.
 There lay the hope of Cræsus ; thither came
 The old King's Dream for its accomplishment.

There is a cry in Sardis ; Hermus hears :
 'Tis not the clamor of the nuptial feast,—
 Atys is dead, they wail for Atys. Where

Art thou, young bride of Atys ? And the King—
 Where is King Cræsus ? Who will dare to say
 Unto the King that Atys hath been slain,
 Atys, the beautiful, the flaxen-haired ?
 He who went out at dawn, who marked the birds,
 Whose youth ran over with him, like a well,
 And when his spirits wearied him, he slept
 Beneath the plane, because his heart was light—
 Who saw the stars at midnight in the sky,
 Who looked into that hollow and knew not
 It was his grave—he is among the dead !
 O weep for Atys, Atys mid the dead !
 And Sardis wept for Atys.

Cræsus called

For vengeance on Adrastus, called on Zeus
 The god of expiations : he assailed
 The powers of Heaven with clamorous prayers,
 and filled
 The streets with imprecations, such alone
 As agony could wring from out the heart
 Of a bereaved and stricken parent. “ Curse,
 “ O curse the impious stranger, god of hearths !

“ O curse Adrastus, thou dread power who reign’st
 “ O’er mortal friendship ! curse me that dark man !”

Slow the procession moves along the streets
 Of twilight Sardis. See ! the white form comes,—
 Atys, the prince, returning to his home.

King Cræsus gazed upon the murderer there,
 An apparition wan as the cold corpse
 Upon the swaying bier : King Cræsus gazed,
 And he unprayed his curse, his passion sunk,
 Sunk down, and in his soul he pitied him ;
 And beautiful and touching were his words,
 Albeit he then remembered with a pang
 How once Adrastus spake of the sweet hour
 When he should give back Atys to his arms :
 That hour had come ;—it had no name in words !
 “ Stranger !” (for by that title he addressed
 The prince, scarce knowing whether it enhanced
 Or lessened his mishap, that it befel
 By stranger’s hand) “ I will not seek to add
 “ By word of mine to thine exceeding woe :
 “ Nay, rather I would bid thee take good heart,
 “ Although environed by calamity.

"Adrastus! it was God Who slew my son,
 "The holy God Who warned me by the Dream.
 "Adrastus! it was God Who by thy hand
 "Laid Atys low, and quelled King Cræsus' pride.
 "Wretched Adrastus! be consoled for this—
 "It was not thou, but God:—yet why by thee,
 "Yea, wherefore by thy hand, most rightly dear
 "For thy true princely heart, and for thy griefs?"

Thus spoke King Cræsus most benignant words :
 For his whole mind was raised and magnified,
 Made merciful and quiet as a god's,
 By the extremity of mortal woe.
 Oh what a royal heart had that old man !

Sardis remembered many a long, long year
 The funeral of Atys; how the King
 Hung o'er the motionless white frame, and wept
 And wept and spoke not, how the thrilling wail
 Of the young bride resounded on the plain
 Throughout the dim expanse, and how the prince,
 The rapt Adrastus, spoke not, did not seem
 To hear or see, but was as if he strove
 With some dull baffling mist within his soul.

All gazed upon Adrastus ; yet no eye
 In the whole crowd of Sardians had a look
 Of rage or hatred ; for the King's great soul
 Had passed into his people.

Midnight came :

The glowing light of the red pile sunk down.
 Hermus, who had been troubled with the glare
 Of nuptial lamps, and with the smoke and sparks
 Of the dull wine-quenched pyre, now calmly ran
 Past the low fresh-turfed barrow where the bones
 And ashes lay. There were no feet of men,
 No Sardian lingering from the mournful crowd,
 Around the grave ; but night, calm night was
 there.

The silent darkness rested on the plain,
 By the swift rushing river undisturbed.
 Adrastus stood beside the mound in thought,
 The prince, the gentle heart, twice stained with
 blood.

He knew that there was suffering on the earth ;
 But he, yea, he was singled out from men
 For awful woe, bent, laden, trampled down,

A gazing-stock for all posterities,
 His being brought beneath some special law
 Of the invisible world, so marked and sealed
 That he should not claim kindred with mankind.
 Therefore he slew himself upon the grave ;
 Not from despair, nor goaded by remorse,
 But, mastered by an instinct of deep love
 For earth and for his fellows, did he sit
 In judgment on himself, and, so condemned,
 With solemn self-collection did he slay
 Himself upon the barrow newly raised,
 That he might abrogate that fearful law
 Which had hung evil round him like a cloak.

King Cræsus mourned for Atys two whole years
 Within his latticed halls : his pride was spent ;
 And from that cloud of sorrow he emerged,
 With heart and eye chastised, a royal sage ;
 And with a melancholy gentleness
 Of thought and aspiration so endowed,
 Men marvelled at the wisdom then outpoured
 From lips which learned their sole philosophy
 From suffering : such transfiguration wrought

The love of God within the pagan's soul :
And such the working of a Heaven-sent dream
To sanctify that ancient Lydian king.

In early days I read this tale ; it seemed
Most touching and most wise, and it has lived
Within my memory : in the simple Greek
Of the old chronicler it truly is
A stirring tale : perhaps less touching here,
(Though English is a plaintive tongue) yet not
Without pathetic wisdom of its kind.

XLIX.

I.

ONCE more amid the alder trees,
Once more among the hills,
Mid dewy grass and fading leaves
And the blue steam on the rills.

II.

Once more amid the pomp of clouds,
Once more in shade and shower,
What wonder is it I should weep
For joy of autumn's power?

III.

One year unto another calls
In most mysterious ways :
Autumn to autumn joins, and wakes
The old autumnal days.

IV.

In springtide thus the jocund past
One long, long springtide seems,
And summer shapes and finishes
The bygone summer's dreams.

V.

Such separate prerogative
Doth in the seasons lie,
And of sweet use may wise men make
This deep consistency.

VI.

Dear native land ! dear English friends !
Now doubly dear are ye :
Is it a trouble or a joy
Wherewith ye welcome me ?

VII.

Since last I walked through withered fern
What tides of sight and sound
To far-off seas and foreign streams
My pliant heart have bound !

VIII.

Mid gorgeous cities, stirring lands,
Mid wonder, change, and mirth,
For months and months there was to me
No England on the earth.

IX.

I saw the fruit-tree roads of France,
The ancient Lombard plain,
And Venice in her white sunshine
Still sitting by the main.

X.

And oh ! how blue were all the bays,
How strange the desert peace,
The marbles hoar, the olives grey
In old heroic Greece.

XI.

And bright was May in your green haunts,
Ye sweet Propontid isles !
And bright along the Bosphorus
Were summer's evening smiles.

XII.

All up the wild Danubian plain,
In Transylvanian dells,
By Mur's romantic castled heights
And Drava's mountain wells,

XIII.

Along the shining bends of Inn,
In old Bavarian towns,
By many a deep green Austrian lake,
On bleak Bohemian downs,

XIV.

From hill and stream and ruin hoar—
Grave lessons did I learn,
Deep wisdom poured by earth herself
From her own ancient urn.

XV.

Now is it all a dream, a thing
Gone with the buried past,
A vision broken up, a light
Which had no life to last.

XVI.

And cheerfully, like vernal plants
That pierce the April earth,
Last autumn's thoughts come calmly up
With old autumnal mirth :

XVII.

Calmly and cheerfully they come,
As though I had been here
Nor left this single mossy bank
Through all the bygone year.

XVIII.

Thought must be earned by thought, and truth
From other truth be won :
Next year the fruit will come of seed
In this year's travel sown.

L.

A Vision of bright Seas.

I.

I NEVER think without a thrill
Of wild and pure delight
Of all the leagues of blue, blue sea,
Which I have sailed o'er merrily
In day or dead of night.

II.

With moon and stars, at morn and eve,
In sunny wind and shower,
How often hath it worked in me,—
That mystery of the kingly sea,
With joyous spells of power !

III.

My heart doth burn whene'er I gaze
From o'er the vessel's side,
And see the tremulous sunbeams sleep
Far down within the azure deep,
And rocking in the tide.

IV.

And I could sit for hours and watch
The white phosphoric track,
Which like a streaky firebrand burns,
Where'er the foamy rudder turns
Across night's ocean black.

V.

Methinks that laid, as I am now,
Upon the rack of pain,
The briny seaweed's fragrant breath
On old St. Hilda's breezy heath
Might woo health back again.

VI.

O it is well sick men should go
Unto the royal sea ;
For on their souls as on a glass,
From its bright fields the breath doth pass
Of its infinity.

VII.

Go forth from thy sick room this day,
My languid heart ! go forth ;
Mount on the merry moorland breeze,
And sweep o'er all the murmuring seas
We've known in south or north !

VIII.

How quick the mountains melt away
The girdle of dark firs !
And Wansfell's broad opposing bank
Fades off into a shining blank,
And see—the vision stirs !

IX.

Waves rock and flow, ships come and go,
And cities are displayed
Appareled in transparent air,
With quays and harbors : surely ne'er
Was Merlin so obeyed !

X.

There Genoa bends along the shore
Beneath her Apennines ;
There emulous waters force their way
Into the locked and jealous bay
Where old Venetia shines.

XI.

There are the low Dalmatian isles,
The gems on Adria's arms,
Albania's glens and white Corfu,
And Græcia's belt of waters blue,
And deep Ægean calms.

XII.

Fling wide the antechamber door,
Where sweet Propontis catches
Sophia's gleam at break of day,
Or holy wail from cupola
Repeating the night watches.

XIII.

Thou, hospitable Euxine ! thou
Art not forgotten here,
Upon whose undulating breast,
Spite of all legends, did I rest
Calm as on Windermere.

XIV.

Oh bliss ! what lights the sun and moon
Have scattered o'er the sea,
Which, though to others they would seem
Confused into a radiant dream,
Are all distinct to me.

XV.

My mother taught me how to love
The mystery of the sea ;
She sported with my childish wonder
At its white waves and gentle thunder,—
Like a man's deep voice to me.

XVI.

When in my soul dim thoughts awoke,
She helped to set them free ;
I learned from ocean's murmurings
How infinite, eternal things,
Though viewless, yet *could* be.

XVII.

In gentle moods I love the hills
Because they bound my spirit ;
But to the broad, blue sea I fly
When I would *feel* the destiny
Immortal souls inherit.

LI.

The Year after Travelling.

SEE how last year is coming back again !
Dost thou not feel bright cities work in thee,
At which we touched upon the midland sea,
And fair cathedrals towering on the plain ?
Through all the gathered mould of hope and fear,
The heap of wintry things which I have cast
Upon my memory, relics of the past
Work up in little earthquakes from last year.
And is it not a very pleasant trouble
To feel this year our calendar is double ?
My thoughts have been bewildered all the day,
As though I walked on air, not on the ground,
And, from the date, I have this evening found
It was a misty sight of Genoa.

LII.

Genoa.

I.

I AM where snowy mountains round me shine ;
But in sweet vision truer than mine eyes
I see pale Genoa's marble crescent rise
Between the water and the Apennine.

II.

On the sea-bank she couches like a deer,
A creature giving light with her soft sheen,
While the blue ocean and the mountain green
Pleased with the wonder alway gaze on her.

III.

And day and night the mild sea-murmur fills
The corridors of her cool palaces,
Taking the freshness from the orange trees,
A fragrant gift into the peaceful hills.

IV.

And from the balustrades into the street
From time to time there are voluptuous showers,
Gentle descents, of shaken lemon flowers,
Snapped by the echo of the passing feet.

V.

And when the sun his noonday height hath gained
How mute is all that slumberous Apennine,
Upon whose base the streaks of green turf shine
With the black olive-gardens interveined !

VI.

How fair it is when, in the purple bay,
Of the soft sea the clear-edged moon is drinking,
Or the dark sky amid the shipmasts winking
With summer lightning over Corsica !

VII.

O Genoa ! thou art a marvellous birth,
A clasp which joins the mountains and the sea ;
And the two powers do homage unto thee
As to a matchless wonder of the earth.

VIII.

Can life be common life in spots like these,
Where they breathe breath from orange gardens
wafted ?

O joy and sorrow surely must be grafted
On stems apart for these bright Genoese.

IX.

The place is islanded amid her mirth,
The very girdle of her beauty thrown
About her in men's minds, a virgin zone,
Marks her a spot unmated on the earth.

X.

I hear the deep coves of the Apennine
Filled with a gentle trouble of sweet bells ;
And the blue tongues of sea that pierce the dells,
As conscious of the Virgin's feast-day, shine.

XI.


For Genoa the Proud for many an age
Hath been pre-eminent as tributary
Unto the special service of St. Mary,
The Blessèd Virgin's chosen appanage.

XII.

I see the streets with very stacks of flowers
Choked up, a wild and beautiful array,
And in my mind I thread my fragrant way
Once more amid the rich and cumbrous bowers.

XIII.

And, unforgotten beauty ! by the bay
I see the two boys and the little maiden,
With crimson tulips for the Virgin laden,
Wending along the road from Spezia.



XIV.

Edith ! thou askest why this evening long
I have in selfish silence been immured,—
This is the vision which I have endured,
Shaped, to win pardon, in a simple song.

XV.

It would augment thy happiness and mine,
If thou, dear Edith ! could'st but share with me
This magic vision of the Midland Sea,
And the white city with her Apennine !

4

LIII.

Names of Good Omen.

THERAPIA ON THE BOSPHORUS.

I.

THE sunny wisdom of the Greeks

All o'er the earth is strewed :

On every dark and awful place,

Rude hill and haunted wood,

The beautiful bright people left

A name of omen good.

II.

They would not have an evil word

Weigh heavy on the breeze,

They would not darken mountain side,

Nor stain the shining seas

With names, of some disastrous past
The unwise witnesses.

III.

Here legendary Argo touched
In this blue-watered bay ;
Here dark Medea in pursuit
Her poisons cast away,
Polluting even the odorous shades
Of pure Therapia.

IV.

Look how the interlacing trees
Their glowing blossoms wreath !
Is this a spot for poison plants,
For crime or savage death ?
The Greeks endured not that on it
Should pass so dire a breath :

V.

Unlike the children of romance,—
From out whose spirit deep
The touch of gloom hath passed on glen
And mountain lake and steep,

On Devil's Bridge and Raven's Tower
And lovelorn Maiden's Leap :

VI.

Who sought in cavern, wood, and dell,
Where'er they could lay bare
The path of ill, and localized
Terrific legends there,
Leaving a hoarse and ponderous name
To haunt the very air.

VII.

Not so the radiant-hearted Greeks,
Who hesitated still
To offend the blessed Presences
Which earth and ocean fill ;
Whose tongues, elsewhere so eloquent,
Stammered at words of ill.

VIII.

All places, where their presence was
Upon the fruitful earth,
By kindly law were clasped within
The circle of their mirth,

And in their spirits had a new
And consecrated birth.

IX.

O bless them for it, traveller !
The fair-tongued ancients bless !
Who thus from land and sea trod out
All footmarks of distress,
Illuminating earth with their
Own inward cheerfulness.

X.

Unto the Axine Sea they sent
A name of better feeling ;
Dark powers into Eumenides,
A gentle change ! were stealing,
And poison-stained Therapia
Became the Bay of Healing !

LIV.

A Bay upon the Euxine Sea.

I.

SEVEN times doth Asia's flowery coast give place
To Europe's shrubby cliffs and verdant Thrace ;
And Europe into seven sweet bays retires
Where summer sunrise shoots his pearly fires ;
There holy East and royal West are meeting,
Each from the other's headlands still retreating.
With currents and with counter-currents seven
The cold, bright waters, blue as bluest Heaven,
Seem like the beating pulses of the free
And angry spirit of the Euxine Sea.

II.

Lift up the veil of legendary gloom
Which hangs before that dreadful sea, the womb,

So seemed it to the reverent men of old,
 Where every direful shape and form untold
 Of dark disaster lurked ; upon whose flood
 A mist, and no mere sea-born mist, did brood
 With heavy, hanging shadow : it was then
 A sea for gods and heroes, not for men ;
 Yet with a kindly name they worshipped thee,
 The offering of their lips, dread Euxine Sea !

III.

With what a very diadem of fear
 They crowned thee king of waters ! Far and near,
 The Delian blessing his Ægean calm,
 Or Attic dweller at some inland farm
 Amid his oliveyards, had many a tale
 Enough to make the listening throng turn pale.
 Perplexing phantoms chasing ships behind,
 Mists, monsters, sudden wreck and wondrous
 wind,—
 Such were their dim uncheerful thoughts of thee,
 Thou legend-circled thing, dread Euxine Sea !

IV.

Thy wandering waves had limits in the air,
 Begotten of men's faith : they thought not where
 Nor yet how near thou wert, but cast thee far
 Unto the confines of their thoughts, a bar
 Not reverently to be o'erleaped : the past
 One streak of light across the darkness cast ;
 One pathway, moonbeam-like, the gloom did
 break,—

'Twas Argo passing with her burning wake ;
 And in a cloud of troubled minstrelsy
 They wrapped thy sacred name, dread Euxine Sea !

V.

But see this harmless glossy-surfaced ocean,
 Cradling my boat with quiet-throbbing motion !
 This is no dismal threshold to be strown
 With horrid wreck, no tempest-spirit's throne.
 Faith fails the legends ; the eye seeks but sees
 No monument, no twin Symplegades.
 Oh how transfigured, waves and headlands drear !
 The very soul of May is breathing here !

Such skies, winds, waters—can they truly be
Upon the veritable Euxine Sea ?

VI.

The hollow waves, like summer thunder, roar
On Thracia's rocks and low Silistria's shore.
There Russia looms, or mistwreaths cheat the eye,
Upon the horizon line of history ;
And there, where yon white ship hath set her
helm,
Are Persia's havens deep, the garden-realm,
The clime where earth, their thoughtless earth,
discloses
Nought to the poet's soul but wine and roses.
These are the shadows, bygone or to be,
Which flit along thy coasts, dread Euxine Sea !

VII.

Now that the Strait, her seven fair bays unbinding,
Draws the caique through each blue snaky winding,
My heart is lighted on from cape to cape
By torchlike song or legendary shape,

While from the flowery Kandili there come
Cool odorous breaths to old Byzantium.
The sight of thee, dread Euxine ! calm and near,
Hath made thee not the less a thing to fear ;
Else why this troubled thrill which works in me
When I have seen and touched the Euxine Sea !

VIII.

But lo ! Stamboul ! A thousand sunset fires
Are gilding tall shipmasts and cypress spires.
White palace roof and glittering Kiosk,
Old Latin tower, rude gate, and pillared mosque,
Trees, houses, fountains, ships—float off and rise,
Like clouds instinct with light, into the skies.
What shall Arabian prose or Persian verse
In after years to my dull ear rehearse,
When eye hath seen upon a Mayday even
Stamboul by sunset lifted into Heaven ?

IX.

To-day my thirsty spirit sought to drink
Of dreadful legends on the Black Sea's brink :

This sunset is a trouble in my soul ;
 Deep in my heart I heard the Euxine roll,
 I felt it in me as a mighty thought,
 The block whence forms of grandeur might be
 wrought :
 But now 'twixt light and gloom my mind is tossed,
 Bright thoughts in dark, and dark in bright, are
 lost ;
 Once more an untouched thing, outside of me,
 I hear the murmur of the Euxine Sea !

LV.

The Plains of Hungary.

I.

O if in a valley

With close mountains round,

Or in the green alley

Of a woodland ground

There be a joy in nearness to each sight and
sound,—

II.

Or if in the bowers

Of a pleasance old

There be joy for hours

In the sheets of gold

And red and white and blue, in formal shapes
unrolled,—

III.

Or if in a ruin
 With weeds overgrown,
 Where time is undoing
 That which men have done,
 It is a joy to be hemmed in with aisles of stone,—

IV.

And if from all places
 Close and desolate,
 As from silent faces
 Through a convent grate,
 Sad thoughts and gentle ones on the beholder
 wait,—

V.

There is strong emotion
 And a dancing mirth
 From the sight of ocean,
 And wide plains of earth,
 Which is not a less heavenly though a wilder
 birth.

VI.

Though there be a glory
On the famous fields,
Which chivalric story
With its sunset gilds,
And where the cypher of the past a wisdom yields,

VII.

There is glory brighter
On the desert scene,
Where the only writer
That hath ever been
Is the pure sky above with its unhindered sheen.

VIII.

And the earth's sweet changes
Are a quiet past,
Whose soft action ranges
O'er the solemn waste,
And where green grass grows now, wild waters
once were cast.

IX.

To the misty sunlight
Is its bosom bare,
And the flaky moonlight
Makes no shadows there,
And it is free to all outpourings of bright air.

X.

Whether pearly morning
Doth herself transfuse
In the sky, adorning
All the myriad dews,
Or twilight steals from sunset banners of red hues ;

XI.

Whether noonday glimmers
In the hazy dome ;
Or, like noisy swimmers
Scattering the foam,
The hailstorms with white oars across the putzas
roam ;

XII.

Whether night's strong motion,
Without sound or tool,
The bright earth and ocean
Strives to overrule,
Lights wander here and there, and still the scene
is beautiful.

XIII.

In the boundless quiet
Of the misty plain,
The wild horses riot
Without bit or rein ;
The fatal touch of man hath not passed on their
mane.

XIV.

With their broad eyes flashing,
Beautiful and free,
The swift head is dashing
In its untamed glee
Across the plain, as ships may dash across the sea :

XV.

And far off delaying
By the shrunken rills,
With a haughty neighing
The lone air it fills,—
Fierce creatures in the joy of their own mighty
wills.

XVI.

Day with silvery brightness
Dawned there upon me ;
The hoarfrost with its whiteness,
Like a moonlit sea,
For leagues of land both far and wide gleamed
mistily.

XVII.

From the pallid glimmer
Of the morning moon
Till the plains grew dimmer
In the vaporous noon,
In which a tree or cloud would be a blessèd boon,

XVIII.

In relays and courses
At rude cabins given,
We galloped, like wild horses,
Till the cool fresh even,
And we saw two things all day,—the green plain
and heaven !

XIX.

Once we saw the rolling
Of the Danube nigh,
Once we heard the tolling
Of churchbells wafted by,
But otherwise we were as wild birds in the sky.

XX.

But towards night less dreary
Was the grassy way,
And we passed, unweary,
Villages that lay,
Oases, in a belt of light acacia.

XXI.

Still we came no nigher
The Carpathian chain,
A fence of white haze-fire
Compassing the plain,
Like land, which may be cloud or land, seen o'er
the main.

XXII.

On the desert ample
Evening's chilly hour
Bade the breezes trample
In their wildest power,
And o'er the twilight plain like viewless horses
scour.

XXIII.

Soon the winds were shaking
All the ether blue,
Where the mists were making
The ambrosial dew,
And with a moaning surge a solemn tempest grew.

XXIV.

And I felt my spirit
On the storm ascending,
Where for ever near it
A dim shape was bending,
Like a wildhorse herd across the desert wending.

XXV.

And my thoughts were going
From me with wild force,
Like the white hairs flowing
From the dashing horse ;
I laughed whene'er the strong wind struck me in
its course.

XXVI.

We met a serf belated
On the dusky plain,
With his waggon freighted
With the baron's grain ;
He was half blinded with the whirling sleet and
rain.

XXVII.

And I felt it better
In the desert drear
To be without fetter
Of submissive fear ;
And I cried out in anger to the peasant near,—

XXVIII.

“Leave thy waggon naked
To the angry sky,
Let thy thirst be slakèd
With earth’s liberty,
For freedom is a vaster thing than slavery.”

XXIX.

But the long-haired vassal
Looked at me confounded,
As in hour of wassail
By young lords surrounded,
When biting scoff hath e’en *his* abject spirit wounded.

XXX.

When on every feature
I saw fear and pain
I felt for the poor creature
On that lonesome plain :
Though storms without raged on, my heart was
calm again.

XXXI.

Men there are who think not
That great words unmeet
Are wells whence we drink not
Waters clear and sweet,
And wonder the world stays not at such words
its feet.

XXXII.

Such are liberators
With their spirits lifted
To the mood of traitors,
From their good end shifted,
For lack of sympathy on frothy shallows drifted.

XXXIII.

Surely it is better
We should not undo
This wild vassal's fetter,
Lest his heart should rue
His altered lot, as men set free too early do.

XXXIV.

But the storm is over ;
And with oakwoods walled,
We, with quail and plover
For the night installed,
Are in the moonlit heart of the Bakonver Wald.

LVI.

The Raft from Linz.

I.

ANOTHER bend among the hills,
One other bend, and we shall hear
Among the green o'erhanging trees
The rocky Wirbel boiling near.

II.

Upon the Danube and the woods
Lay evening's red and troubled gleam,
And calmly, as a lifeless thing,
The raft from Linz went down the stream.

III.

And then how softly rose the hymn
For Mary's succor in the strait,
And that good Angels in the pool
To steer the little craft might wait.

IV.

It bent and strained, and in the foam
Awhile the crazy vessel quivered ;
And then it glided like a swan—
St. Mary hath the raft delivered.

V.

And there the convent boat appears
To ask an alms of all who pass,
Oblation made with willing heart
To Mary and St. Nicholas.

VI.

And thus to great Vienna bound,
The boatmen watch the stars all night,
And for their hymn and for their alms
They deem the weather calm and bright.

VII.

Yet who would blame the holy faith,
Although to untrue forms it cling,
Which thus unto the unseen world
For blessing every thought would bring ?

VIII.

And those who, safe in modern powers,
Heed not the whirlpool in their way,
And count the men of Linz untaught,
Are in true lore less taught than they.

IX.

Alas ! how oft hath science made
The heart obtuse, the eye untrue,
Obscuring providential tracks
With veils a woodman's faith sees through !

X.

We want the earth left to ourselves ;
And signs where God doth hide to bless
We class, as though in classing them,
We took away their awfulness.

XI.

For this to cold, unhumble men
Is all that vaunted knowledge gives—
The raising self by hiding God,
The disenobling of our lives.

XII.

The men of Linz see into Heaven,
Where sages but detect its law ;
Judge which the better wisdom is,
And who hath holier love and awe.

XIII.

Yea, rather than this barren dream
Upon the men of Linz should pass,
'Twere better they should kneel and pray
To Mary and St. Nicholas.

LVII.

The Heiress of Gosting.

TO MY FRIEND EDWARD HOLKER WELCH.

I.

Is there a stream on this sweet earth
In vale or woodland, where
Traditions of unhappy love
Breathe not like summer air ?

II.

There is no thought to hallow earth
With more consoling gladness
Than the true comfort she hath given
To lovers in their sadness.

III.

Green trees and streams and castled steeps
Are sweetest when they move
The gentle forms in stirring songs
Of old disastrous love.

IV.

Born of no time or nation, still
In its imperial force
Love with the meekest forms of earth
Holds simple intercourse.

V.

Love, like the abbey-building monks,
By wood or stream is found :
Who ever knew a love-tale haunt
A cold, unsightly ground ?

VI.

A pilgrim through green Steyermark,
The poet now is resting,
Soothed by the woodland voice of Mur,
Beneath the rock of Gösting.

VII.

Across the river and the mead
The cliff's tall shade is thrown,
Where sheltered from the sun I sat
Upon a rugged stone.

VIII.

A tender tale of luckless love
In that sweet gloom had part,
And with the shadow of the rock
It went into my heart.

IX.

Above were the green battlements
Of Gösting's castle strong ;
I saw it not, but felt it there,
A very power of song.

X.

Ah ! fate hath wronged thee, gentle tower !
Thou wert too fair to shine
The bright spot in the legend dark
Of hapless Adeline.

XI.

Was ever maid like Adeline
In all the Styrian land ?
Was ever noble stout and wise
As old Count Ferdinand ?

XII.

Had ever knight a silver tongue
His lady's heart to melt,
And yet a hand in battle strong,
Like Franz of Lilienfeld?

XIII.

Was ever peer in paynim war
So merciful and bold,
As the young lord of Shackenstein,
The black-haired Leopold?

XIV.

Ah! like a pensive summer cloud
Their memory floateth by,
Far dearer for the shade it casts
Than all the bright blue sky.

XV.

Even in those strong-featured times
When human act and feeling
Through all the world with ruder ways
And greater forms were dealing,

XVI.

For masculine chivalric love
The two young knights were famed,
And never in the court or camp
Were separately named.

XVII.

And oft to Träusen's earth-lipped stream
Came Leopold, a guest,
Within the halls of Lilienfeld
For many a week to rest.

XVIII.

And when brave Franz returned to stay
With Shackenstein's young earl,
How short were summer's longest days
Within the vale of Thörl!

XIX.

In boyhood when their limbs were first
In little mail arrayed,
In fashion, color, and in weight
Their suits alike were made.

XX.

Both flashed among the Styrian vales,
Like very stars of light,
Upon their proud and prancing steeds
Of true Hungarian white.

XXI.

In all the Transylvanian wars
They shared one board and tent,
And shone with fellow scarfs and plumes
At foreign tournament.

XXII.

Ah love ! were all the lives of men
Told truly one by one,
The hearts thou hast dealt fairly with,
And those thou hast undone,

XXIII.

At what a price of others' griefs
We might with awe behold
Each single hour of happy love
On earth is bought or sold !

XXIV.

Two tender hearts along one path
Through all the world may move,
If they at some fair turn in life
Encounter not with love.

XXV.

There is no incense half so sweet
Unto the jealous power,
As the sad fragrance offered up
From friendship's withered flower.

XXVI.

But Franz apart at Lilienfeld,
The earl at Shackenstein,—
Each knew not how the other loved
The heiress Adeline.

XXVII.

Count Ferdinand to Hungary
On mission high hath gone,
And Adeline has to herself
The castle huge and lone.

XXVIII.

A lady lone was Adeline
Within her river bower,
Yet, dreaming of young Leopold,
She had no weary hour.

XXIX.

She worked not at her tapestry,
Nor on her cithern played,
But to her bowerwoman oft
The heartsick lady said :

XXX.

“ Now do I envy, Marian,
That pleasant vale of Thörl,
The very rocks and trees that look
All day at that young earl.

XXXI.

“ And yet”—how pale the lady turned—
“ He never can be mine,
I love with hopeless hidden love—
Ah woe is Adeline !

XXXII.

“ In all the vales of Steyermark,
In rich Carinthia’s dells,
The love of Franz and Leopold
A household wonder dwells.

XXXIII.

“ And every maiden loves the pair
As though they were her own,
And did belong unto the land,
The special boast of none.

XXXIV.

“ And Franz sits mute at Lilienfeld,
And pines for love of me ;
He is a fair-tongued knight—and yet
The earl speaks fair as he.

XXXV.

“ I vow—St. Mary grant that love
My vow may never shake—
That Adeline their wondrous bond
Shall never, never break.

XXXVI.

“ And I for some few weary years
Upon this rock will pine,
And live and speak with those two knights,
And die and make no sign.

XXXVII.

“ And, when his heiress droops and dies,
The good Count Ferdinand
To Mary and St. Hilian
May leave his woody land.”

XXXVIII.

Thus Adeline, the lady lone,
Spake to her bowermaid,
And she was pale as death itself,
And mutely hung her head.

XXXIX.

But hark ! two horsemen loudly greet
The porter gray and old,
And blythe the seneschal replies—
'Tis Franz and Leopold.

XL.

And, privileged intruders ! see
They part the chestnut bough,
And doff their caps to Adeline—
Now lady ! for thy vow !

XLI.

And pale as death ! O ashy pale !
But quiet as a queen,
The lady from her bower stepped forth
With calm and gracious mien.

XLII.

In converse sweet on common things
They walked among the flowers ;
The summer day turned on its hinge
With soft and noiseless hours.

XLIII.

Upon the white rose by the rock
There grew one blossom fair,
Which Franz in idle mirth had said
Would suit his long brown hair.

XLIV.

And Adeline, from sorrow won,
Forgetful of her vow,
Stooped down unto the blossom white,
And plucked it from the bough.

XLV.

And surely utterly entranced,
Yet so the tale is told,
She twined it in the raven hair
Of her own Leopold.

XLVI.

Franz gazed on her with startled eye,
The young earl fondly smiled,
And thus the secret of his love
Was from his heart beguiled.

XLVII.

O wondrous are the ways of men,
And passion's sudden changes,
Through which the soul in one short hour
With desperate action ranges !

XLVIII.

That smile hath withered years of love :
In Franz's burning spirit
Ejected love's intensity
Dark hatred doth inherit.

XLIX.

Dishonor to the spotless knight
Becomes an airy sound ;
And the red blood of Leopold
Hath stained that garden ground.

L.

No scream, no cry from Adeline,—
But silent as the grave
A snowy robe beneath the bridge
Floats down the woodland wave.

LI.

Young Franz leaned on his reeking sword,
And pitifully gazed
Upon the white and ghastly face
To the blue sky upraised.

LII.

And, many a year of penance past,
Within the vale of Thörl
An anchoret in sackcloth shirt
Was buried near the earl.

LIII.

Then far and wide the tidings spread
Unto the Danube's shore ;
Count Ferdinand from Hungary
To Gösting came no more.

LIV.

And Gösting Castle now is left
Unto the wild white roses,
And not a maid in Styria durst
Wreathe one into her posies.

LV.

And daily on the pleasant stream
The white leaves fall and shine,
And float away beneath the bridge,
Symbols of Adeline !

LVIII.

The Yellow-Hammer.

I.

A YELLOW-HAMMER in the rain !
And that on this Carinthian plain,
So far, so far from home !
It fills me with old childish years :
And then these happy, happy tears—
Do what I will they come !

II.

Behold him now ; he never stops,
Among the pattering raindrops
A blythe disturbance making,
Beating for ever on one key,
Pleased with his own monotony,
And his wet feathers shaking !

III.

What tender memories are bound
To this familiar hedge-row sound !
The creature's homely glee
Associates me with the hours,
When—so pure childhood willed—all showers
Were sunshine showers to me.

IV.

Away he goes, and hammers still
Without a rule but his free will,
A little gaudy Elf !
And there he is within the rain,
And beats and beats his tune again,
Quite happy in himself.

V.

Within the heart of this great shower
He sits, as in a secret bower,
With curtains drawn about him ;
And, part in duty, part in mirth,
He beats, as if upon the earth
Rain could not fall without him.

VI.

Ah homely bird ! thou canst not know
How far into my heart doth go
That melancholy key,
How from thy little straining throat
Each separate, successive note
Beats like a pulse in me.

VII.

Through blinding tears meek fancy weaves
Far other fields, far other leaves
Than those by Drava's side ;
For now the looks of long lost faces
And the calm features of old places,
Like magic, round me glide.

VIII.

Thou art a power of other days,
A voice from old deserted ways
Obscured by trackless flowers,
An echo of the childish past,
Thus touchingly and strangely cast
Into these foreign bowers.

IX.

O it was right and well with me
When I could love a single tree
As a green sanctuary,
When I could in the meadow lie
And look into the silky sky
For hours, and not be weary !

X.

Now over sea and over earth
I pass with hollow, heated mirth
Which doth but gender sadness,
And with uneasy heart I range
Through all the pageantry of change
To gather moods of gladness.

XI.

Time flies, and life ; and manly thought,
Into unsunny currents wrought,
Is in hoarse eddies wheeling :
I am a man of growing wants,
And I have many wayward haunts,
Haunts both of thought and feeling.

XII.

When joys were simple, days were long ;—
All woven into one bright throng,
Like golden bees at play,
One with another softly blending,
As though they could not have an ending,
And all were but one day.

XIII.

I thank thee, gentle bird ! for this ;
Thou hast awakened childish bliss,
A sweet monition given ;
And willing tears for youthful sin
Are fragrant rituals, that may win
The old light back from Heaven.

XIV.

And sure I am that summer day
Ne'er shone on a more grand array
Or gorgeous pomp of mountains ;
And o'er the plain in shining rings
The Drave with blitheest murmurings
Comes from his Alpine fountains :

XV.

And seen through this bright, dazzling rain
How fair is yon Carinthian plain,
A richly wooded park,
Where groupes of birch with silver stems
Rise up, like sceptres of white gems,
Among the fir-clumps dark :

XVI.

Yet am I cast upon lost years ;
The Present is dissolved in tears ;
So is this bird empowered,
An oracle upon the bough
He sits, through him the Present now
Is by the Past deflowered.

LIX.

Bamberg.

I.

THERE are who blame sensations of delight,
Born of our happy strength and cheerful health,
As though we could lay by no moral wealth
From the pulsations of mere joyous might.

II.

How poor they make themselves who thus disown
The fresh and temperate body's right to wait
Upon the soul, and to exhilarate
The heart with life from animal spirits thrown !

III.

For me a very weight of moral wealth
From the bright sun upon the ivy wall
And white clouds in the sky doth gaily fall,
Making my days a thanksgiving for health.

IV.

The whetting of the mower's scythe at morn,
The odorous withering of the new-cut grass,
Breeding I know not what enjoyment, pass
Like a new world into my spirit borne.

V.

O there are harvests from the buoyant mirth
Which hath such power my nature to unbind,
Letting my spirits flow upon the wind,
As though I were resolved into the earth.

VI.

When I have bounded with elastic tread,
Or floated, without root, a frolic breeze
Waked by the sunlight on the fields or seas,
Moods of ripe thought have thence been gatherèd.

VII.

I stood upon the Michaelsberg ; below,
Into three cities cloven by the streams,
Was ancient Bamberg, and the morning beams
Had touched a thousand gables with their glow.

VIII.

Around, a dull expanse, did cornfields shine,
The shallow Regnitz and the snaky Maine
Were coiled in ruddy links upon the plain,
And lost beyond the pinewood's hard black line.

IX.

The radiance on the Minster roof was poured,
And then above the convent's dusky bowers
Sprung all at once the four illumined towers,
As though St. Michael had unsheathed his sword.

X.

I thought not, Bamberg ! of thy bishops old,
The rich Franconian church, or abbots gone
To beard the emperor at Ratisbon,
With saucy squires and Swabian barons bold.

XI.

But there I stood upon the dizzy edge,
And saw a sight worth all the barons bold,—
A woven web of purple and of gold,
A living web thrown o'er the rocky ledge.

XII.

It was a cloud of rooks in morning's beam,
Which, rising from the neighboring convent trees
With all their pinions open to the breeze,
Swam down the steep in one majestic stream.

XIII.

It was a purple cataract that flung
Its living self adown a rocky rent,
And midway in its clamorous descent
The rainbow-glancing morning o'er it hung.

XIV.

Some were of gold, which in a moment shifted
Into a purple or a brilliant black,
And some had silver dewdrops on their back,
Changing as through the beams the creatures
drifted.

XV.

Beneath, the multitudinous houses lay :
The living cataract one instant flashed

Through the bright air, then on the roofs was
dashed
In seeming shower of gold and sable spray.

XVI.

I watched with joy the noisy pageant leap
Into the quiet city; and the thrill
Of health did so my glowing body fill
That I would fain sail with it down the steep.

XVII.

I was beside myself; I could not think :
A beauty is a thing entire, apart,
And may be flung into a passive heart,
And be a fountain there whence we may drink.

XVIII.

Ah me ! the morning was so cool and bright,
And I so strong, and it was such a mirth
To be so far away upon the earth,
That I was overflowed with sheer delight.

XIX.

Away, like stocks and stones, went serious though,
Now buried in the foamy inundation,

Now through the waves of exquisite sensation
From time to time unto the surface brought.

XX.

I rescued nothing, for I had no power ;
And in the retrospect I dare to boast,—
I would not for a world of thought have lost
The animal enjoyment of that hour !

LX.

The Daily Tree.

I.

QUEEN MARY said that on her heart,
Engraven there as with a dart,
Transferred by bitter thought,
The name of Calais would be found
In cypher legible and round,
By meditation wrought.

II.

And I believe that through the eye
The household forms, which round us lie
In sweet and shapely mass,
Things daily touched and seen and heard,
By sympathetic power transferred,
Upon the spirit pass.

III.

In childish days there was to me
A yearly vision of the sea ;
And now within my soul
I never cease to see and hear,
In wood or mountain, far or near,
That estuary roll.

IV.

My mother's voice, from this fair world
Withdrawn long years ago, is furled
In my retentive ear,
And oft, by sweet surprises taken,
I hear the blessed accents waken
A startling echo near.

V.

I daily see an old Scotch fir,
Of such a beauty as to stir
My heart with joyous thrill :
My days would scarce be what they are,
If that tree were not alway there,
A shadow soft and still.

VI.

It is a pleasure overnight
To think how morning's beams will light
Its fan-like summit airy ;
And sure I am that it must lie
Pencilled upon my memory,
Moonlit, and visionary.

VII.

There must be pictured on my soul
Its ruddy and fantastic bole,
Where snaky lights glide down ;
For fancy frequent vision weaves
Among its wiry, blue-green leaves
And quiet plummy crown.

VIII.

And when the breath of evening rocks
That ancient tree with harmless shocks,
The two birds cradled there,
With sea-like murmurs round them, ride,
Their vessel anchored on the tide,
A sweet, love-mated pair.

IX.

I love thee, reverend old Tree !
For thou art verily to me
Like some kind household god.
What visitations of delight,
What aspects mutable and bright,
Hast thou not daily showed !

X.

O didst thou grow in sunken dell,
Within the sound of abbey bell,
Hard by the cloistered square,
Like some illuminated book
Would be thy variable look
Unto the inmates there.

XI.

I would some monk of olden times
Had watched thee from the matin chimes
Until the nocturns rung,
And chronicled thy light and shade
In hieroglyphic show displayed
As thy broad branches swung.

XII.

Thou wouldst have been his world, a chaste
And sinless record for thy past ;
And yet a form to fear
And meekly think of, as a thing
That might its placid umbrage fling
Upon his tombstone near.

XIII.

I have seen morning on it fall,
And intersect its coronal
With silver lines on high,
And sunset clothe its giant limb
In huge bronze armor, bright and dim
In scales alternately.

XIV.

And when around its rugged waist
The twilight's roseate air is braced
In clasps of amethyst,
It were a sceptre most sublime
For fabulous kings of olden time,
Wielded by giant wrist.

XV.

And oft with transmutation slow
Have I beheld the rough stem glow,—
Red gold without a stain,
When diligent wet mists come down
And, dripping from the feathery crown,
Burnish the bole with rain.

XVI.

And I have seen a weight of snow
On its strained branches drooping low,
Dividing the dense crown ;
Like cares from off an old man's heart,
All noiselessly the bent boughs part,
And the white flakes fall down.

XVII.

And often in the breathless noon,
Or else beneath the unclouded moon,
It is absorbed on high ;
And most I love its sable hue
Imbedded in the yielding blue
Of a translucent sky.

XVIII.

O quiet Image! thou art lent
To be a moral incident
Each passing day to me,
In all I do and all I think
A gentle and restraining link,—
How much I owe to thee!

XIX.

The wind rose up : our dreary way
Through the Bavarian fir-woods lay,
Near Rothenburg's old wall ;
My own memorial fir-tree wrought
Deep in my heart, with anxious thought
Lest it that night should fall.

XX.

Ye wild north winds! that o'er the length
Of moaning heath collect your strength,
That noble fir-tree spare,
When all the laurel borders through
Your sad triumphal road ye hew,
And rend the coppice fair!

XXI.

Be true to its old anchor, Earth !
That it may long a moral mirth
Within the vale abide !
When I am gone I would that ye
Should still enjoy that princely tree,
Kind Hearts of Ambleside !

THE END.